

I Shall Seal the Heavens

(我欲封天)

Book 7

Immortal Ancient Builds a Bridge Leaving the Ninth Mountain!

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Story Description:

Shall Seal the Heavens is currently one of the most popular xianxia stories in China. It is about a failed young scholar named Meng Hao who gets forcibly recruited into a Sect of Immortal Cultivators. In the Cultivation world, the strong prey on the weak, and the law of the jungle prevails. Meng Hao must adapt to survive. And yet, he never forgets the Confucian and Daoist ideals that he grew up studying. This, coupled with his stubborn nature, set him on the path of a true hero. What does it mean to “Seal the Heavens?” This is a secret that you will have to uncover along with Meng Hao!

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1005: Hope Regarding the Ancient Realm!

As the killing intent of virtually the entire planet began to envelop Ji Xiufang, an ancient voice calmly spoke out from the Ninth Mountain, echoing out to fill the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“Elder Brother Fang....” said the voice, seemingly filling the entire starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Planets trembled, and innumerable ripples shrank down into the form of an eye.

Within that eye, an old man sat cross-legged. He had white hair, and looked very ancient, and as he spoke, he lifted his right hand and pointed toward Planet East Victory.

As he pointed, boundless ripples spread out through the starry sky, covering Planet East Victory as if to prevent the first generation Patriarch from attacking.

Up to now, the first generation Patriarch hadn’t spoken a single word. Now, his hoarse voice echoed out, speaking a single sentence that caused the ripples in the starry sky to suddenly stop in place.

“I demand rectification!”

At the same time, Ji Xiufang screamed miserably. The sound echoed out as her head was separated from her body. Her body was then crushed into nothing but fragments, as if by a gigantic hand.

She was annihilated, destroyed in both spirit and body!

Even an almighty Dao Realm expert couldn’t stand up to a single blow from the killing intent of the first generation Patriarch!

In the moment that Ji Xiufang died, a boom could be heard as the killing intent slammed violently into the sealing shield surrounding Planet East Victory. Cracking sounds could be heard as the spell, being maintained by the combined forces of three of the Ji Clan’s Dao Realm experts, collapsed into pieces.

It shattered into countless tiny pieces that were swept up by a massive wind, which then blew them away from Planet East Victory. Innumerable fissures then opened up in the void, spreading out in a way that resembled a spider web.

The three Dao Realm experts were scared witless, and their minds filled with roaring. Their faces fell as they did everything they could think of to escape, even to the point of unleashing Essence power.

However... the killing intent from Planet East Victory was as intense as ever, enough to shake all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“Patriarch, save us!!” The three Dao Realm experts were so scared they felt as if their scalps were about to explode. An intense sensation of deadly crisis filled them, a feeling of fear that they had not experienced for a long, long time. It was as if... the killing intent from Planet East Victory wanted to wipe them clean away from the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Any one of these people could set foot onto any planet in the Ninth Mountain and Sea and make it tremble. A mere glance from them could send a sect rising to the top, or could destroy it. But now, they were so terrified that their hearts were trembling.

They knew that the killing intent of the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch... could prevent them from entering reincarnation. They would never be reborn, and would truly be erased from the world.

They could only watch as the killing intent bore down on them, three Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Ji Clan. It was at this point that more ripples spread out through the starry sky, as if some power were forcefully interposing itself between the killing intent and the three old men. The ripples formed together into a huge, illusory eye.

The eye appeared to be ancient, and as soon as it appeared, it stared fixedly at the killing intent.

“Elder Brother Fang, enough! You’re not a match for me.”

The killing intent came to a stop in front of the eye. Scintillating light spread out as it formed into the shape of a person. It was the first

generation Patriarch, who hovered there, formed from countless motes of shining light that made his visage somewhat blurry.

At the same time, the old man sitting cross-legged within the eye looked over calmly at the first generation Patriarch.

“I might not be able to seal the Heavens, but I can shatter the Heavens of the Ninth Mountain and Sea,” the first generation Patriarch said coolly. As his voice echoed out, Meng Hao was standing down on Planet East Victory. Even with the level of his cultivation base, he was able to see what was happening. He looked up into the sky and saw the killing intent of the first generation Patriarch. He watched him slaughter a Dao Realm expert, and then cause the other three Dao Realm cultivators to flee for their lives. All of this caused Meng Hao’s eyes to gleam with a strange light.

“One of these days, I’m going to be just as powerful as him!” he thought, panting. When he heard the first generation Patriarch’s words, an even stranger expression rose up on his face.

“How come it seems like these two guys are playing chess? One of them knows he can’t outplay the other, but he still gives the impression that if he gets pissed off enough, he could just flip over the game board...” Meng Hao cleared his throat. For some reason he suddenly realized that he quite liked the style of the first generation Patriarch.

Up in the starry sky, the old man in the giant eye didn’t respond to the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch.

“The Ji Clan is not permitted to step half a pace into the starry sky surrounding Planet East Victory,” the first generation Patriarch said slowly.

The old man in the giant eye looked deeply at the first generation Patriarch, then slowly nodded. Finally, the eye flew backward, enveloped the three Dao Realm experts, and then vanished.

The matter of Ji Xiufang and the three Quasi-Dao old men wasn’t brought up.... Apparently, the Ji Clan was willing to give them up as the price to pay to the Fang Clan to end the situation.

When the giant eye faded away, the image of the first generation

Patriarch also disappeared. No figure was visible, and the killing intent vanished. Everything went back to normal.

However, the Ninth Mountain and Sea was only beginning to be shaken.

All of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea witnessed the rise of the Fang Clan that day. They personally watched as the Fang Clan of former glory, which had remained quiet and silent for so many years, once again became one of the most domineering forces in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Even the Ji Clan had to pay the price, which caused all cultivators to gasp. Now, they looked toward the Fang Clan with expressions of shock and fear.

The Fang Clan had remained quiet for a long time, leading many people in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to believe that their strength was just for show. Now, such notions were shattered. The Fang Clan made it very clear to everyone that they were just as domineering as they always had been!

The reappearance of the first generation Patriarch, despite him being a clone, or more accurately, the soul of Planet East Victory, caused everyone who witnessed the event to be thoroughly shaken. Furthermore, it became known that, in addition to the first generation Patriarch, the Fang Clan had two Dao Realm experts. In the end, though, it was the first generation Patriarch himself that was the most shocking deterrent.

Considering the Ji Clan was incapable of exterminating the Fang Clan, how could any of the other sects and clans possibly be qualified to be on an equal footing with them?

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely and utterly shaken.

The Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans mused on the matter silently. It was now with great caution and fear that they looked toward Planet East Victory and the Fang Clan.

The first generation Patriarch had slaughtered Dao Realm experts, instilling such fear that they could only gasp in response.

“Considering the Fang Clan is like this, they fully deserve to be called...

the despots of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.”

“When the Fang Clan revealed all their trump cards in that battle, and allowed everyone to see, you would think that would remove some of their air of mystery. And yet... that final trump card is simply too astonishing....”

After much thought, the Dao Realm experts sighed and returned to their various organizations.

It was in this manner that the upheavals of the Fang Clan ended. The Fang Clan was the clear winner. The fangs bared by the Ji Clan were shorn clean, and they were forced to pay the price of one Dao Realm expert and three Quasi-Dao cultivators.

At the same time, the problem of the traitors within the Fang Clan was handled perfectly. After the baptism of blood, the Fang Clan... was more stable than ever.

In addition to the presence of the first generation Patriarch, the Fang Clan also had a worthy successor. First was Meng Hao, who was already stunning beyond compare, a person the Ninth Mountain and Sea would never forget. Joining Meng Hao was Fang Wei.

The fact that Fang Wei was focused on defending the clan to the death was something that many people had noted.

Meng Hao and Fang Wei were now objects of admiration and envy on the part of the other sects and clans.

“First they have Meng Hao, who stifled all of the members of his generation! His path... will definitely stretch far and wide. And then there’s Fang Wei. He might be a bit weaker than Meng Hao, but he’s strong enough to defend the clan!”

“One will wage battle outside the clan, the other will remain inside to defend it! With the two of them, the Fang Clan will only achieve greater heights of glory....”

“No wonder the Ji Clan attacked the Fang Clan. It won’t be too long before... the Fang Clan might be strong enough to contend with Lord Ji for control of the Heavens again. After all, they’re the Fang Clan, ya know?

They used to be just like the Ji Clan, a powerful clan of warriors!”

“The Ji Clan has their Karma, and the Fang Clan has their reincarnation. Two warrior clans who caused a rain of blood to fall upon the Ninth Mountain and Sea back in the day...”

The war of the Fang Clan ended. However, it didn’t take long before the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea sprang into action. Various Patriarchs prepared to personally take their Chosen to Planet East Victory to offer congratulatory gifts due to the appearance of the first generation Patriarch.

After the Ji Clan left, Planet East Victory returned to normal. The only thing that remained of the traitorous clan members was their blood that stained the ground, and the reek of gore that filled the air. The resurrected clan members were filled with complex feelings. Under the direction of the Grand Elder, the recovery work began.

Fang Wei stood there silently. After looking around, bitterness rose up in his heart, and he bowed his head.

The first generation Patriarch did not stay. The whole clan bowed deeply in respect as he reentered the rift to the ancestral land. In the moment before he disappeared, he turned and looked at Meng Hao for a moment.

In that moment, a tremor ran through Meng Hao, and the first generation Patriarch’s voice suddenly rang out in his mind.

“You have signs of the legacy of Lord Li on you.... The legacy of Lord Li is connected to East Victory. At the same time, it is no longer on Planet East Victory; it has already been acquired by a cultivator from this planet.

“As for the Ji Clan sowing chaos here in the Fang Clan, that also had to do with the legacy. Actually, the legacy was used simply to draw out the Ji Clan; a strategy, that’s all. However, when the time comes to activate it, if it is connected to you by destiny, then you should be able to do so.

“One Thought Stellar Transformation.... Without a bloodline clone, it’s impossible to cultivate it to the final degree!

“Nirvana Fruits... use them well. The members of the Fang Clan have

four lives. If you combine them together at the right time, then you can open... the door to the Ancient Realm!

“You and I are connected by destiny, drawn together by blood.... The Ancient Realm begins with Dao Fruit, but you... if you begin with Nirvana Fruit, then you can accomplish something completely unheard of and shake the entire Nine Mountains and Seas!”

The ancient voice echoed in Meng Hao’s ears before fading away. Meng Hao trembled as he watched the first generation Patriarch step into the rift and then vanish.

After hearing the Patriarch’s words, Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine. Gradually he came to a new understanding. Before, he had been confused as to the role played by the Nirvana Fruits in the whole matter. How effective would they have been if Fang Heshan had been able to resist the urge to spring into action? If that had happened, wouldn’t it mean that the entire series of events simply wouldn’t have occurred?

Meng Hao now understood that the core element of the plan hadn’t been his Nirvana Fruits, but rather, the revelation regarding the legacy of Lord Li. That was why the Ji Clan had made their move.

“One Thought Stellar Transformation... a Daoist magic that, when cultivated to the ultimate degree, can be used to incarnate into a planet....” The starstone in his left eye glittered, causing his heart to pound even faster. According to what the first generation Patriarch had said, the Ancient Realm... was not too far away for him.

“I have two Nirvana Fruits from the first generation Patriarch, and two of my own. Nirvana Fruits can allow members of the Fang Clan bloodline to live four lives!

“Four Nirvana Fruits, when I can absorb all of them with no time limit... that... is when I will step into the Ancient Realm!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a bright light. The sight of the first generation Patriarch slaughtering members of the Dao Realm once again flashed in his mind.

Chapter 1006: The Sword and the Shield of this Generation!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with a brilliant light. After a moment, he sent some divine will into the terracotta soldier.

The terracotta soldier could not stay outside of the ancestral land for a long time. After receiving Meng Hao's instructions via divine will, it faced him, then clasped hands and bowed. Meng Hao didn't feel like parting with it, and yet could only watch as it entered the rift and turned into a statue once again.

"One day I'll do the same thing as the first generation Patriarch! I'll use a piece of the Ruins of Immortality... to take you away. That way you... can accompany me as I wage war among the Heavens!" Meng Hao made this promise to the terracotta soldier deep in his heart. It was a promise, a guarantee, much the same as the one he had made to Han Shan that year in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. He would never forget such promises.

After the terracotta soldier entered the ancestral Land, the rift closed, and then vanished.

The sky above the Fang Clan returned to its normal state. However, the land itself seemed wasted. Signs of withering could be seen on countless plants and trees, and the spiritual energy of the entire planet had apparently been reduced.

Although the upheavals in the clan had not resulted in any overt losses, in reality, the entire planet had been weakened, not to mention the loss of all the traitorous clan members.

Meng Hao stood there thoughtfully for a moment before coming to the conclusion that the weakening of Planet East Victory must have something to do with the first generation Patriarch's awakening.

An intensely powerful entity like that, a person willing to flip the game board over rather than continue playing, who could strike fear into the heart of Lord Ji himself, could obviously not be awakened easily.

By now it was evening and, off in the distance, the sun was scattering its twilight rays over the land. The resurrected clan members were lost in reminiscence, thinking about the many people who had once existed around them. No wild joy broke out because of the resolution of the chaos in the clan.

In contrast, heavy sighs existed in the hearts of all the clan members.

The ordinary clan members felt this way, and Fang Wei even more so. It was the same with Fang Shoudao, Fang Yanxu, and Fang Danyun, who hovered silently in midair.

"It's over," Fang Shoudao said softly, looking out over the entire Fang Clan. His voice was deep and archaic, and as it echoed out, all of the clan members looked up into the sky.

"Mortal bodies can sometimes contract vile ailments. If sicknesses like that are not expunged, they can lead to death.

"Clans can also be infected with ailments!

"Yesterday, a foul disease lurked deep within the Fang Clan. If it were to explode out, it would definitely affect the entire clan! Today, that ailment was rooted out. Although our Fang Clan is now grieving and in pain, at least we now have a new lease on life!

"Tomorrow will be a new day for us! We will cause all cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea to recall the glory of the Fang Clan!

"I will no longer remain in secluded meditation. From now on, I will assume the office of Clan Chief. I will lead the Fang Clan to unparalleled heights of glory!" As Fang Shoudao's words echoed out, it caused flames to ignite in the eyes of all of the members of the Fang Clan down below. It was as if his voice carried some mysterious power that entered the clan members' hearts and caused them to burn with determination.

Fang Wei stood there silently, completely alone, with no clan members even willing to approach him. He had no friends left. His father, his grandfather, and all of the other members of his bloodline were all dead.

He was the only one who had been resurrected.

Fang Yanxu hovered in midair, looking at Fang Wei immersed in his bitterness, and sighed inwardly. He waved his finger down toward Fang Wei, causing him to shudder, and then suddenly lurch up into the air. All members of the clan watched as he flew over toward Fang Yanxu.

As Meng Hao watched what was happening, he suddenly realized that Fang Wei's corpse had long since vanished from within his bag of holding.

"Are you still willing to defend the Fang Clan?" Fang Yanxu asked calmly.

Fang Wei began to tremble. After a long moment of silence, he looked down at the other members of the Fang Clan, and at Meng Hao. Finally, he turned back to Fang Yanxu, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

"To defend the Fang Clan has been my primary aspiration in life!"

By this point, all of the members of the Fang Clan were staring silently at Fang Wei. All of them remembered the tragic scene in which he had died; those images were engraved deeply on their hearts.

Fang Yanxu looked at Fang Wei for a long moment, and it almost seemed as if he were looking into the young man's heart. After a long moment, a slight smile appeared on his face.

"Henceforth, you will follow me. In the future... you must live up to your name and protect the clan! You will not be the sword of the clan; instead, you will become... its shield!"

Fang Wei was shaking, and tears streamed down his face as he clasped hands and bowed toward Fang Yanxu.

Fang Yanxu sighed, then turned and bowed to Fang Shoudao. Then he waved his hand and departed with Fang Wei, the two of them turning into beams of colorful light that shot away from the Fang Clan in the direction of the Medicine Immortal Sect.

Fang Danyun and Fang Shoudao watched them leave, and sighed inwardly.

Fang Yanxu was the current generation's shield, and also its shadow!

Fang Shoudao was the clan's sword, as well as its glory, boundless and supreme!

In every generation of the clan, there would be a blazing sun who shone with boundless light, and behind that person, there would be a shadow. That shadow was there to assist the blazing sun, to help that person accomplish many things they themselves could not, to endure more than was possible, to deal with things that could not be touched by the other. Such persons were not shining swords that garnered mass attention. Instead, they became... shields that others would eventually overlook!

A person like that had to be willing to remain silent and unobtrusive. They had to shrink from the light, give up all their status and position, abandon all glory. They were a shadow, and the shield of the clan.

In this generation, Fang Yanxu picked Fang Wei as his future successor.

It was a path that ordinary clan members might not understand. However, Meng Hao understood everything, and it caused him to tremble. His expression was a complex one as he stared at Fang Wei, recalling what he looked like as a child, and the resolute words he had spoken in his tender, young voice.

“My name is Fang Wei! I want to become a powerful expert because I'm going to defend my clan for my whole life!”

The Seventh Patriarch, the Fifth Patriarch, and the Third Patriarch, the Ancient Realm experts also watched Fang Yanxu and Fang Wei leaving, their expressions gradually flickering with understanding.

This was the Fang Clan, a place where clan rules ensured the continued glory of the clan. In each generation, there were two important people, one who existed in the light, the other in darkness. One was the sword, the other was the shield.

One basked in glory, the other was like a shadow.

Meng Hao now also understood why, although the first generation Patriarch had passed away into meditation, his clone had transformed into a planet, to defend the clan. It was because the first generation Patriarch's

true self had been the clan's sword, whereas his clone was the shield.

Even though his true self ended up dying, his clone could continue to defend the clan throughout all eternity....

"The Fang Clan...." he murmured. Gradually, he was beginning to approve of the clan much more than he had before.

Fang Danyun bowed to Fang Shoudao, then looked down at Meng Hao with a smile. It was a smile of encouragement, praise, and even more, anticipation, anticipation that he could accomplish something momentous that was far different than what Fang Wei had done.

Smiling, he turned and left, heading back to his home in the Dao of Alchemy Division. His longevity was reaching its end, and even given the fact that he could split with his Unicorn Immortals, it would be hard for him to hold on for much longer. Yet, he was without any regrets.

He hoped to use the rest of his life to once again lead the clan's Dao of Alchemy Division into glory.

Much about the Medicine Immortal Sect, the shield of the clan, were merely stories that had been purposefully created by the Fang Clan. However, one thing was true: of the clan's three Holy medicinal pills, the Medicine Immortal Sect really could concoct two, something that the Dao of Alchemy Division was incapable of.

The clan members down on the ground below now burned with determination to see the clan rise to prominence. They began to reconstruct the many areas of the ancestral mansion that were in ruins, and wash away the blood that soaked the ground. It wouldn't take long to restore them. Perhaps by the following morning... the Fang Clan would not look very different than it had before, at least not to any outsider.

Fang Shoudao watched Fang Yanxu and Fang Danyun leave, then began to leave himself. The Seventh Patriarch and the others all joined him.

Meng Hao blinked, then cleared his throat. The sound wasn't very loud, but it was enough to echo out in the air and be heard by Fang Shoudao and the others. However, Fang Shoudao pretended that he didn't hear it

and continued off into the distance.

Meng Hao was now starting to get the sense that something fishy was going on. Although the Ji Clan had come because of the legacy of Lord Li, and would likely still have caused a disturbance even if things had not played out the way they had regarding Meng Hao...

In Meng Hao's opinion, he had been part of the plan all along, and although he didn't mind being used by the clan, what he did mind was... being used and not getting anything out of it!

"Hey, they should give me some money!" he thought. "I sacrificed a lot to help out! I was scared to death on multiple occasions, and suffered serious mental trauma! At the very least, they have to give me some sort of explanation, right?!"

Feeling very wronged, he stared at Fang Shoudao and the others receding into the distance, and then called out in a loud voice, "Patriarchs, hold on a moment!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, Fang Shoudao and the others' faces flickered. However, they waved their sleeves, and their bodies began to fade as they teleported away.

Meng Hao was now getting very anxious.

"Patriarchs, wait! Don't run away!! Hey, you old fogies, **STOP RIGHT THERE!**"

Fang Shoudao and the others were about half faded away when Meng Hao suddenly burst out in anger. When the other clan members in the ancestral mansion heard his words, their hearts began to pound.

Fang Shoudao suddenly stopped in place, and his vanishing form rapidly grew clear. Realizing that he had no way to get out of the situation, he turned and glared sternly at Meng Hao.

"You little hoodlum! I'm your grandfather's grandfather! Do you really dare to call me an old fogey!?"

Thinking about how irritated he was, Meng Hao braced himself and

retorted loudly: "Why wouldn't I dare? I didn't do anything wrong! I performed some heroic services for the clan just now!"

Fang Shoudao stared at him wide-eyed, then suddenly swished his sleeve. In a flash, Meng Hao vanished from his position in midair, to reappear inside of a building.

He glanced around cautiously, then backed up a few paces.

Fang Shoudao laughed in spite of himself as he sat there off to the side, looking expectantly at Meng Hao.

"You feel wronged, huh?" he said. "Go ahead and explain yourself."

"During the clan upheavals, I spilled blood for the clan!" replied Meng Hao instantly. As soon as the words left his mouth, Fang Shoudao waved his hand, causing a softly glowing light to wash over Meng Hao. Instantly, all of his wounds were healed. Actually, his wounds had already recovered by more than half, but now they were completely recovered, and even the pores of his entire body had opened up. In fact, his cultivation base was now even more stable than before.

"There you go, all healed up," Fang Shoudao said with a slight smile. As he looked at Meng Hao with that smile, he looked like nothing more than a wily old fox.

"During the battle, I ate a ton of medicinal pills!" Meng Hao continued carefully. "I even had to absorb quite a bit of Immortal jade! AND spirit stones!" After he finished speaking, Fang Shoudao waved his hand again. This time, no softly glowing light appeared, but instead, a bright screen. Visible on the screen was a detailed accounting of everything that had happened from the moment Meng Hao had transcended his tribulation, to the end of the battle. During that time... he had not consumed any medicinal pills, nor had he absorbed any Immortal jade, let alone spirit stones.

Meng Hao's heart trembled, but his expression was unprecedentedly solemn as he looked at fox-like Fang Shoudao. All of a sudden, he realized that he was up against a formidable opponent.

Chapter 1007: The Old Fox vs. the Fox Cub!

“When I was fighting those Chosen, I was fighting for the glory of the clan! I made the Fang Clan the center of attention of the whole Ninth Mountain and Sea!” Meng Hao said, staring Fang Shoudao in the eye. He had finally realized that the old man’s aura was actually very similar to his own.

“Oh, that’s a good point. Very well. Henceforth, you are the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan. Both to those inside the clan and toward outsiders, you now represent the clan itself!” Fang Shoudao waved his hand, causing a golden medallion to fly out in a beam of light and then hover in front of Meng Hao. It was inscribed with the character Fang 方 on one side, and on the other side, the word Chosen 天骄.

Meng Hao stared at the medallion in shock, then glared back at Fang Shoudao. He suddenly had the feeling that he was being toyed with, a serious provocation in the area which he cared most about.

“My heart grows cold with disappointment to be manipulated by the clan like this!” Meng Hao said, gnashing his teeth.

Fang Shoudao waved his finger at Meng Hao, causing a warm feeling to spread across his chest and over his heart.

“Feel a bit warmer now?” he said coolly.

Meng Hao was about to flip his lid. He had never, ever met someone as shameless as this old fogey. He had already explained himself quite thoroughly, and yet had been sidestepped three times in a row.

“During the clan upheavals, I single-handedly stopped the possessed Fang Wei!” he cried. “I saved a bunch of fellow clan members! I even managed to kill Fang Xiushan!

“I was the one who summoned the Dao Guardsman to fight against the three Quasi-Dao experts! I helped make sure that your plan succeeded!

“I also killed Fang Heshan!

“In fact, the spark that lit the whole fuse was my Nirvana Fruits!

“I’ve done a lot for the clan and I demand a reward!!”

“Very well, you want cultivation resources, right?” Fang Shoudao said with a sigh. “It seems that about half of your personality is exactly the same as your grandfather.” Feeling a bit guilty, he cleared his throat. He waved his right hand, causing Meng Hao’s eyes to gleam with anticipation. Immediately, a strip of paper appeared in front of Fang Shoudao.

A few swishing sounds could be heard as Fang Shoudao then wrote his name down on the piece of paper.

“I know you’re fond of getting promissory notes,” Fang Shoudao said with a smile, “so I’ve prepared one for you. However much you think the clan owes you, go ahead and write it down yourself.”

Meng Hao gaped at the piece of paper. When he looked up, his eyes were bloodshot. He was about to continue fighting back when Fang Shoudao’s expression suddenly turned serious.

He took a deep breath and stared gravely at Meng Hao. Meng Hao, who had just been on the verge of losing his temper suddenly couldn’t help but reign it in.

“Fang Hao!” Fang Shoudao said, his voice sounding deep and extremely dignified.

“I know of everything you’ve done for the clan, and I understand that you feel wronged,” he continued, his voice now soft and archaic. “I’m even more aware of all the meritorious service you’ve provided. There’s no need to even mention anything else. The simple achievement of opening your Immortal meridians to the pinnacle has shaken the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. Anyone who did that in any sect or clan would definitely be gifted with a precious treasure.

“It’s the same here! You are just as important to our clan as someone of the Dao Realm!

“Fang Wei will be the shield of the clan, and you... will be the sword!

“Henceforth, he will be the shadow, YOUR shadow! While you bask in glory, he will remain obscure and unknown. That is because you are the true future hope of the clan!

“Do you really think that the clan is being stingy? Withholding a reward from you?

“You’re wrong. Let me tell you, the clan would never treat a blazing sun like you with the slightest bit of stinginess. However... are you aware of the price that had to be paid to awaken the first generation Patriarch?

“The first generation Patriarch passed away in meditation long ago. What you saw earlier was only his clone, or perhaps you could say, the spirit of Planet East Victory. Normally speaking, he remains in slumber. Awakening him causes Planet East Victory to be withered up for a thousand years!

“In order to ensure that Planet East Victory will continue to rotate normally for the next thousand years, the clan has to pay an indescribable amount of resources. Right now the clan... really has no reward to give you!

“Furthermore, there is no reward valuable enough to represent how important you are to the clan. Therefore, I have already made an important decision regarding this matter.” Fang Shoudao rose to his feet and looked calmly at Meng Hao.

“I already discussed the matter with your father, as well as Fang Yanxu and Pill Elder, and the decision has been made final. From now on, you... will be the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan!” As soon as the words left Fang Shoudao’s mouth, Meng Hao’s mind began to reel.

“Crown Prince?” Meng Hao gaped for a moment. To virtually any other member of the Fang Clan, a title like that represented supreme glory. However, to Meng Hao, it represented a future of endless amounts of spirit stones and Immortal jade.

“That’s right,” Fang Shoudao continued, his expression somewhat

wistful. “Currently, your cultivation base is weak. However, once you reach the Dao Realm, you will be the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan. As you know, it has been many, many years... since a true Clan Chief has arisen.” Fang Shoudao looked at Meng Hao, his expression one of anticipation and love as he extended his hand, causing a command medallion to appear.

It was violet-colored, and glowed with a strange light. Although it was merely a command medallion, it was clearly a rare Ancient Realm treasure!

“This object is the official symbol of your status as Crown Prince. Once you reach the Ancient Realm, you can refine it into a true precious treasure.” Fang Shoudao waved his hand, causing the command medallion to fly over toward Meng Hao, where it settled down into his palm. That small command medallion felt as heavy as a whole mountain.

If Meng Hao didn’t possess a True Immortal fleshly body, then he wouldn’t even be able to hold it.

“This is your home, and you are a young lord here. In the future, you will be in a position of leadership, and therefore, all of the wealth here will eventually belong to you. If the clan is facing difficulties now, such as being extremely poor, then would it really be the right thing for you to take away the resources of the clan? As a young lord of the clan, you should actually be thinking of ways to increase the clan’s wealth!” Fang Shoudao let out a long sigh, and a pained expression appeared on his face.

“If you don’t believe me, I can take you to see for yourself.” Fang Shoudao waved his hand, causing both Meng Hao and himself to vanish. When they reappeared, they were inside of an enormous tower.

“Over here is where we used to have a mountain-like collection of Immortal jade. Look at it now....

“This used to be filled with an indescribable amount of spirit stones. Now look at it....

“This area used to be packed tight with all sorts of magical items.”

Fang Shoudao led Meng Hao through the clan’s treasure-houses, and

although they weren't completely empty, they were depressingly bare. After finishing the tour, Meng Hao felt somewhat deflated.

He almost couldn't believe that the Fang Clan, was actually... destitute.

"Now do you understand? In addition to all this, the clan also bestowed you with that Bloodline Dragon! It was formed from the blood of the Patriarch himself!" Fang Shoudao sighed.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a long moment, then also sighed. Finally, he gave up on any plans of trying to get a reward from the clan. As Fang Shoudao continued to stand there, sighing, Meng Hao turned to leave. Moments ago, he had even taken the time to peruse the treasure-house records, and knew that everything he had seen was the reality of the situation.

He had also gone so far as to scan the lands with divine sense, and could see how withered Planet East Victory was. The places that once flourished with spiritual energy were now dried up. He also closed his eyes and, based on his bloodline, could sense something that no outsider would be able to sense; Planet East Victory was very weak.

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However, in the following days, as the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea came to visit Planet East Victory and offered congratulations, everything that he had just seen began to change.

He personally watched as all of the organizations which came to visit Planet East Victory brought significant gifts. If only one sect or clan came to visit, it wouldn't matter. But the Three Churches and Six Sects, the Five Great Holy Lands, and even the other Three Great Clans, as well as other smaller organizations, all arrived. Meng Hao couldn't help but stare in shock.

After doing a bit of calculating, he realized that if you added up the value of all the gifts brought by the various sects and clans, it reached a staggering total.... Although it wouldn't be enough to fill the clan's treasure-houses, it was enough to replenish them by about thirty to forty percent.

As Meng Hao watched Fang Shoudao smilingly receive the various guests, he was increasingly struck with the impression that Fang Shoudao was a crafty, wily fox. The old man had easily conned him, and there was nothing he could do about it. After all, everything the man had said earlier made complete sense.

Meng Hao sighed, and decided just to turn a blind eye to the matter. That was the only way to prevent himself from being incredibly irritated. However, he did not participate in the receiving of the guests, and instead stayed in his residence practicing cultivation, attempting to properly absorb his Nirvana Fruits.

If it was just a simple matter of being conned this once, Meng Hao could deal with it. After all, he was now the Crown Prince, a status which he was very satisfied with. Several days later, however, the Three Great Daoist Societies also arrived, and he heard that they had prepared an even more terrifying amount of congratulatory gifts. Each one of their gifts were comparable to the combined offerings from several smaller clans put together. This caused Meng Hao to think that something very fishy was going on.

“Elder Brother Shoudao, Hao’er is both Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, as well as a Conclave disciple of the Nine Seas God World. Please accept these meager offerings as the gifts of introduction we would have presented upon his joining the sect.”

When the cultivators from the Nine Seas God World arrived, Fang Xi immediately hustled over to Meng Hao’s residence, where Meng Hao was meditating, to break the news. Meng Hao was instantly enraged, and his eyes went totally bloodshot. As of now, he thoroughly understood how crafty Fang Shoudao was. He had definitely conned Meng Hao... big time.

If Meng Hao weren’t the Crown Prince, the Three Great Daoist Societies would never have prepared such gifts. It was all because of his new status that the gifts the clan was receiving were so valuable.

Meng Hao gritted his teeth and rose to his feet, then flew up into the air toward the main temple hall of the ancestral mansion, to the location

where the welcoming feast was being held.

Meng Hao didn't mind the fact that Fang Shoudao had made him Crown Prince in order to get more gifts from the Three Great Daoist Societies. What he did mind was that in such an important matter as this, Fang Shoudao, that wily old fox, had actually... not given him any share of it! Not even a lousy ten percent! UNACCEPTABLE!

Both the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto and the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite also sent representatives with extravagant gifts. However, in comparison with the gifts offered by the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto and the Nine Seas God World, those given by the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite seemed much more simple.

In the main hall of the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, the Patriarchs of the various sects and clans were all gathered around a long banquet table, where a grand feast was spread out.

"Elder Brother Shoudao, members of any clan or sect may join the Three Great Daoist Societies. That is because the Three Great Daoist Societies are fundamentally quite liberal when dealing with outsiders. That is how we groom generations of Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea."

"Elder Brother Shoudao, the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto focuses on the sword as our Dao. Hao'er's father Fang Xiufeng is also known for his Dao of the sword. I truly think that Hao'er would have the most success if he joined the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!"

The Patriarchs continued to chat and laugh as the Three Great Daoist Societies began to argue and debate amongst themselves over who would get Meng Hao.

Fang Yanxu and Fang Shoudao sat in the middle of everyone. Fang Shoudao was smiling and nodding, and anyone who didn't know him would think that he looked very kind and gentle. However, when Meng Hao looked at him, he looked like nothing more than the ultimate wily fox.

Chapter 1008: Why The Echelon Exists!

Meng Hao had risen to the top among the true Immortals, and was the Immortal Realm Paragon. After absorbing the Nirvana Fruits, he could leap into the legendary and ancient Immortal Emperor Realm, in which he could slaughter Ancient Realm cultivators with two extinguished Soul Lamps. He had long since shaken the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

When you added in his performance as Fang Mu in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire, he was clearly the most prominent figure in the Immortal Realm. As a result, each of the Three Great Daoist Societies was determined to have him.

It wasn't just the Three Great Daoist Societies. The Five Great Holy Lands and the Three Churches and Six Sects were all extremely interested in Meng Hao. If it weren't for the Three Great Daoist Societies, whose positions were proud and lofty, and the fact that Meng Hao was now the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, meaning he couldn't join any other sect BUT one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, then all of the other groups would definitely have started fighting over him.

In addition to the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the other sects, Meng Hao saw various Chosen with whom he had fought earlier. All of them stood there silently, complex emotions swirling in their hearts.

"His father might cultivate the Dao of the sword, but Hao'er's path is different. He's already become a Conclave disciple of the Nine Seas God World! How could he possibly join the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto?!" In addition to Fan Dong'er's master, the old woman, the other person who had come from the Nine Seas God World was none other than the man who had presided over the trial by fire, the same one who had eventually come to praise Meng Hao so much, Ling Yunzi.

"Who cares about that?" said the representative from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, his tone harsh. "He never formally joined the Nine Seas God World!" He was a middle-aged man, or at least, he looked middle-aged. In reality, his cultivation base was in the Dao Realm, and he looked as

dangerous as an unsheathed sword.

Seeing that both the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto and the Nine Seas God World were not budging an inch, the old man who was the representative from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite smiled slightly.

“Fellow Daoist Fang,” he said, “why don’t you summon Meng Hao and ask him his opinion?”

Fang Shoudao laughed heartily, but before he could say anything, the main door to the temple hall echoed with the sound of a cold harrumph. Meng Hao stalked in, instantly drawing the attention of all gazes inside the hall.

As for the Dao Realm Patriarchs, this was their first time seeing Meng Hao in person, as opposed to his illusory image on a screen. It was also the first time anyone from the Three Great Daoist Societies had personally seen Meng Hao after he had reached true Immortal Ascension.

Other than the various members of the Junior generation, all the other people in the hall were Dao Realm Patriarchs. It looked like more than half of all the Dao Realm experts in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea were present. All of their eyes fell upon Meng Hao, causing him to feel enormous pressure. However, his expression didn’t change at all as he entered the hall. He glared coldly at Fang Shoudao, who cleared his throat a bit guiltily. Fang Yanxu sat off to the side, looking a bit helpless. He coughed dryly a few times.

Everyone was looking at Meng Hao as he stated,

“I will join....”

However, before he could finish speaking, the faces of the three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies flickered. Intense gleams appeared in their eyes, especially the white-haired old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Normally, he looked kind and amiable, but as of this moment, his eyes shone with an extreme brightness.

When the members of the other sects saw this, they stared in shock.

The old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite sucked in a deep

breath. His expression was very serious as he exchanged a glance with the old woman from the Nine Seas God World and the middle-aged man from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. Then he turned back to Fang Shoudao and spoke gravely, "Elder Brother Fang, permit us the use of a private chamber!"

Fang Shoudao's eyes narrowed. He could tell something strange was going on, but after a moment of consideration, he nodded.

Meng Hao was a bit astonished, and quickly swallowed the words he had been about to utter.

Fang Shoudao waved his hand and immediately he, along with Meng Hao and the three old-timers from the Three Great Daoist Societies, all vanished from the main hall. Fang Yanxu was also disconcerted, but this was the Fang Clan after all, so he wasn't worried. Instead, he smiled and began to chat with some of the others who remained behind.

It didn't take long for the sound of conversation and laughter to fill the main hall once again. However, suspicions now filled the hearts of all the Dao Realm experts, even though it didn't show on their faces.

Fang Shoudao and the others reappeared within a hidden chamber in the Fang Clan. Meng Hao's eyes narrowed, and his heart filled with misgivings. He immediately stepped back a few paces.

"Fellow Daoists," said Fang Shoudao, "please explain why we need to use this private chamber!" Fang Shoudao might be an old fox and he might have conned Meng Hao, but as he stepped forward, he placed himself very close to Meng Hao. If anything untoward happened, he would go all out with his cultivation base to make sure Meng Hao stayed safe.

Despite the previous con, everything he had said was actually true. Meng Hao really was as important to the Fang Clan as a Dao Realm expert. Furthermore, appointing Meng Hao to be the Crown Prince had not been a joke. He really and truly did have that status in the clan.

Seeing Fang Shoudao act in this way finally caused Meng Hao to have the feeling that the man really was the clan's Earth Patriarch.

“Elder Brother Fang, this is our first time seeing Meng Hao in person,” said the old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. “On previous occasions, we only saw him on illusory screens, and could not feel... the ripples which are emanating off of him!” The old man looked excited, and breathed heavily when he looked at Meng Hao. The old woman from the Nine Seas God World and the middle-aged cultivator from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto looked equally moved.

Fang Shoudao frowned, taking a few more steps forward to stand directly next to Meng Hao, whereupon he stared coldly at the other three.

“For Hao’er to reach this point means he definitely has his destiny. He is the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, and if anybody tries to steal his destiny, that person will be crossing the line and provoking the Fang Clan’s wrath!” Fang Shoudao’s expression was extremely serious, and his tone was icy.

Meng Hao stood behind him, staring in shock. All of a sudden, he came to the realization that the true use of being the Crown Prince was a sort of protection. His rise to true Immortality had attracted the attention of the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, and now that he was the Crown Prince, anyone who harbored untoward thoughts would definitely be stricken with fear.

Meng Hao could sense the care and concern of the Senior generation of the clan, and his heart softened quite a bit. It even caused his perception of Fang Shoudao as a wily fox to lessen quite a bit.

“Elder Brother Fang, you misunderstand,” said the old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, looking over at Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao, back when you disappeared into the Ruins of Immortality, did you by any chance... encounter a white-robed woman?” It was impossible for the old man to conceal the nervousness in his voice as he asked his question. The old woman and the middle-aged cultivator wore equally nervous expressions.

Meng Hao gaped. After a long moment of silence, he slowly nodded his head in response.

“I knew it!” exclaimed the old man, sounded very excited. Strange gleams appeared in the eyes of the old woman and the middle-aged cultivator. The old man took a deep breath and then made a clutching motion, causing a chunk of black stone to appear in his hand.

At the same time, the old woman and the middle-aged cultivator produced similar stones. All three of the rocks emanated mysterious glows as they flew together to form a large stone slab, which hovered in midair.

“Child, place your hand onto that black stone slab,” said the old man, sounding very excited. “Don’t worry, the three of us don’t harbor any ill intentions toward you.” He looked at Meng Hao with anticipation.

Fang Shoudao frowned. The Three Great Daoist Societies were acting very strange as far as he was concerned, and he was just about to intervene when Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. As for Meng Hao, he had long since speculated that the white-robed woman was somehow connected to the Three Great Daoist Societies.

Instead of placing his hand onto the stone slab, he asked, “That white-robed woman... who is she?”

“Long ago, our world did not consist of only nine mountains and nine seas,” responded the old woman from the Nine Seas God World, her voice soft. “During that era, that white-robed woman was one of three supreme Paragons!”

Meng Hao’s mind trembled, and he didn’t respond. Finally, he lifted his right hand and calmly placed it onto the stone slab. He was already aware of exactly what these three people were hoping to see.

Blinding light emanated out as soon as his hand made contact with the stone slab. When the light touched Meng Hao, an ancient magical symbol suddenly appeared on his forehead.

That magical symbol was actually a number!

The number... 13!

13th in the Echelon!

When the old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite saw the magical symbol in the shape of a number, he threw his head back and laughed. His entire body quivered with excitement. The old woman from the Nine Seas God World began to pant excitedly, and her expression was one of delight. As for the middle-aged man from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, he was also panting, and appeared to be going wild with joy.

“The Echelon! As expected, the Echelon!!”

“Meng Hao has actually joined the Echelon!! The Echelon, prescribed and maintained by a Paragon! The Echelon of the Nine Mountains and Seas!! The key to leaving Heaven and Earth!”

“He’s the second from the Ninth Mountain and Sea to enter!!”

Meng Hao pulled his hand back, and the light emanating from the stone slab faded away. Fang Shoudao frowned. Inwardly, he was shocked, not because of the magical symbol that had appeared on Meng Hao’s forehead, but rather, because of the excitement of the representatives from the Three Great Daoist Societies.

“Fellow Daoists, could you please provide an explanation?” he said coolly, becoming even more vigilant than ever.

“Elder Brother Fang, this matter pertains to the mission of our Three Great Daoist Societies,” said the old man. The old woman and the middle-aged man stood off to the side, the expressions on their face solemn once again. “The information we are about to share with you must not be spread beyond this room.

“Every so often, the Three Great Daoist Societies hold a trial by fire. Its purpose is to search for suitable cultivators for that very Paragon to observe as she searches for people qualified to join the Echelon.

“The Echelon determines the true blazing suns of the entire Nine Mountains and Seas. People who join the Echelon are actually qualified to become legends!

“Furthermore, the Echelon is wrapped up in an enormous mystery, a secret that affects all Nine Mountains and Seas! In fact, the origin of Lord

Li himself is very likely connected to that mystery!

“For many, many years, the Ninth Mountain and Sea has not produced anyone qualified to join the Echelon. As of today... we now have a second!

“The first person to qualify for the Echelon is no stranger to you. It was actually none other than the first generation Patriarch of your Fang Clan!

“Sadly, although he met the requirements, when the time came for him to accomplish the tasks required by the Paragon, he ended up refusing to comply. He actually renounced his own qualifications.

“Elder Brother Fang, this child cannot join just one of our organizations. He... is actually the sole successor of all Three Great Daoist Societies!

“He is not a disciple, he is a successor!

“When cultivators of the Echelon appear on any of the mountains or seas, they instantly become crucially important to any of the Daoist Societies, and will be protected as such. Elder Brother Shoudao, this child’s path is definitely not limited to the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“The fighting that goes on amongst those who wish to enter the Echelon is even fiercer than the fighting which goes on among those who wish to be Chosen. As such, we must not allow Meng Hao’s status as a member of the Echelon to spread prematurely. It won’t be long before we arrange for him to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea and participate in... the Echelon battles of the Nine Mountains and Seas.

“Please place him in our care. We Three Great Daoist Societies are pledged to, and exist solely for the sake of, the Echelon!”

Chapter 1009: I'm Already Married!

Meng Hao's eyes flashed, and he stood there, silent and unresponsive as he listened to the Three Great Daoist Societies discuss both him and the Echelon with Fang Shoudao. He didn't mind this. As soon as he had been appointed to the Echelon by that white-robed woman, he had known that the matter would eventually come to be known by others.

Meng Hao was a cautious person, but now that the matter of the Echelon had been discovered by the The Three Great Daoist Societies, trying to conceal the truth would have been pointless. As of now, it made sense for the clan to be made aware of it too; at least then he would have a foundation of protection.

Fang Shoudao didn't respond at first. After some thought, he finally said, "This is a weighty matter, something I cannot make a decision on by myself. How about this: Fellow Daoists, please return to the hall for now. I'll discuss the situation with Hao'er privately, and then we'll give you an answer."

The representatives from the Three Great Daoist Societies exchanged glances and then nodded. In the blink of an eye, they left the private chamber and reappeared out in the main hall.

After they were gone, Meng Hao glared at Fang Shoudao, who looked back at him, cleared his throat, and then smiled.

From Meng Hao's perspective, that smile looked far too treacherous, causing him give a loud harrumph.

Fang Shoudao cleared his throat, then eyed Meng Hao and said, "I'll give you one percent!" He was well aware that he hadn't brought up the matter of splitting the profits.

"Impossible! I demand fifty percent!" Meng Hao responded immediately.

Fang Shoudao frowned and then said, "All of these gifts are very important to the clan! At the very most, I can give you two percent!"

"Do you know what I've done for the clan? I've—" Meng Hao was just

about to launch into a long explanation when Fang Shoudao interrupted with a loud sigh.

“Hao’er, you’re the Crown Prince of the clan!” he said, looking very disappointed. He sounded pained as he continued, “Don’t you know that as the Crown Prince, you receive special protection from the clan? That shows how much the clan approves of you! How does a piddling profit the likes of which we’re discussing now compare to that?”

“This is your home!

“And right now, your home is in a very tight spot! The first generation Patriarch is sleeping, and the planet is weak. Other than the resources spent on the fundamental cultivation needs of the clan, everything else is used on the planet itself.

“Plus, we have to be on guard against the Ji Clan! In addition to all that, we have to keep some resources in reserve in case we need to awaken the first generation Patriarch again. Meng Hao... do you understand what I’m saying?”

“Considering all of those things, how could the clan possibly agree to send our magnificent Crown Prince to the Three Great Daoist Societies to practice cultivation?!”

“The Fang Clan is your home, and you are one of our family members! You’re even a young lord of the clan! Now is the time for you to forgo a bit of profit to ensure that the clan can have some breathing room. Can you agree to that?”

“In the future, everything in the clan will belong to you, right?”

“If you think this isn’t fair, then go ahead and just take all the gifts! I don’t want any of it!” With that, Fang Shoudao closed his eyes and sighed.

Meng Hao stood there silently. All of a sudden he felt like he really was putting too much emphasis on wealth, and felt a bit bad. Finally, he nodded his head.

“No, I’m fine,” he said. “Forget about it....”

Fang Shoudao opened his eyes, and the kindness in them was apparent as he patted Meng Hao on the shoulder.

“Good boy....” he said. Then he waved his sleeve, causing both of them to vanish and reappear in the main hall.

The banquet continued, and eventually, it was with much anticipation that the Three Great Daoist Societies listened as Meng Hao announced that he would join their ranks. However, Fang Shoudao, citing Meng Hao’s cultivation base as the reason, said that they would have to return in three months to accept him officially.

Meng Hao was crestfallen. Although he understood that the clan was in a very difficult situation, when he thought about the vast amount of spirit stones pouring in, not a single one of which were going to him, it filled his heart with pain.

“Ah, it doesn’t matter. The Patriarch was right. I’m a member of the clan, and should act as such.” Consoling himself all the way, Meng Hao said his goodbyes and then stepped out of the hall. Just when he was about to fly away, two bright beams of light whistled through the air toward the main hall.

Members of the Fang Clan flew nearby in escort, and as the beams of light neared, it turned out to be people from the Li Clan. One was Li Ling’er, whose face was grim and unsightly. Next to her was a middle-aged man who had the bearing of a transcendent being. His features were handsome, and his aura was extremely strong with the power of Essence.

When Li Ling’er saw Meng Hao, she gritted her teeth, and her eyes blazed with fury. In contrast, the middle-aged man’s eyes shone brightly, and he laughed heartily.

“Ah, handsome as expected,” he said. “Before, I could only observe with divine sense, but now that I can look upon you in person, kid, I have to say, excellent. Truly excellent!” The man laughed as he walked into the hall.

Li Ling’er walked past Meng Hao, glaring daggers at him. She looked extremely disgruntled, as if her life was so unfair that she were on the verge of completely losing her temper. Meng Hao stared in shock;

something definitely seemed off. Instead of leaving, he stopped and looked back. The first thing he noticed was Fang Shoudao rising to his feet, and then... he heard the middle-aged man from the Li Clan laugh and begin to speak.

“Elder Brother Shoudao, after I got your jade slip, I immediately called a clan meeting to discuss the matter. Hao’er is a wonderful kid, and I’ve really taken a liking to him. In fact, the entire Li Clan agrees! We all support Hao’er, and once he becomes the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan in the future, our two clans will have a powerful alliance!

“I have come here today prepared to give a Dao Realm treasure, 100 precious Ancient Realm treasures, 1,000 Immortal treasures, 100,000,000 Immortal jades, 10,000,000,000 spirit stones, as well as numerous other items, as the wedding gift for Hao’er and Ling’er!” Laughing heartily, the man from the Li Clan clasped hands and bowed toward Fang Shoudao.

The way he listed out all the gifts he was enough to cause even the Dao Realm experts to stare in shock. Such extravagant gift-giving was something rarely seen. However, as soon as they heard the word “wedding,” everyone reached an epiphany.

Meng Hao was no longer an ordinary clan member. He was the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan, a famous blazing sun in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and even a Crown Prince. With a status like that, any organization would offer up lavish gifts to form an alliance.

A broad smile could be seen on Fang Shoudao’s face as he walked forward, laughing.

“Elder Brother Li, you’re far too polite!” he said. “Hao’er and this lass Ling’er have been engaged since childhood! I just decided to speed up the matter a bit, that’s all.” Fang Shoudao looked over kindly at Li Ling’er.

Meng Hao stood just outside the door to the main temple, gaping in shock. His jaw hung open and his eyes were wide. He almost couldn’t believe what was happening, and he felt his mind spinning.

“He sold me off?” he murmured. He suddenly began to tremble, and rage began to burn inside of him. Generally speaking, it would be the woman

who received betrothal gifts. But considering that this was the Fang Clan, they were the ones to receive the gifts. What Meng Hao was even more incapable of accepting was that... everything that Fang Shoudao had said moments ago... had clearly been a huge con that he had fallen right into.

In the end, he could accept all of that, for the clan. He could part with all the extravagant gifts, despite the pain it caused him.

However, what was happening now had nothing to do with money!

Meng Hao's mind suddenly filled with the image of a Red Wedding, of endless slaughter. That wedding had been one of the most painful moments of his life!

He saw himself holding Xu Qing in his arms until she gradually closed her eyes and faded away. Unforgettable stabs of pain once again filled his heart.

Just barely, he felt as if he could see into the cycle of reincarnation, and all of a sudden, he heard a voice which echoed eternally in his ears.

"I'm in the cycle of reincarnation... waiting for you."

Although Meng Hao often seemed to treat other women flirtatiously, in truth, there was a place deep in his heart where only one woman could enter.

Chu Yuyan could not enter that place, so therefore... how could Li Ling'er possibly do so!?

That was... a place for only one person. It was... a place that belonged only to Xu Qing!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. His eyes shone with coldness, and even as everyone chatted and laughed, he suddenly spoke out, his voice icy, "Patriarch. I am already married!"

As soon as his voice rang out, the entire hall went completely silent. The middle-aged man from the Li Clan turned to glance at Meng Hao, then looked back at Fang Shoudao.

Li Ling'er's eyes brightened with anticipation.

Fang Shoudao coughed dryly and transmitted his voice to Meng Hao: "I'll give you twenty percent of the Li Clan's betrothal gift!"

Meng Hao's face was extremely calm, and his eyes were icy as he stared back wordlessly at Fang Shoudao.

"You little hoodlum. Fine. Fifty percent, no more. You know that the clan is in a difficult place right now, and I—"

"Patriarch," Meng Hao interrupted, his voice calm. "I, Meng Hao, love money. However, not everything in the world can be negotiated in terms of money and profit. I said. I'M ALREADY MARRIED!"

"I have a wife, and her name is Xu Qing." He spoke the words earnestly and very clearly.

All eyes in the main hall shifted to look at Meng Hao. With the exception of the Dao Realm Patriarchs, the other members of the Senior generation, as well as all the Chosen Meng Hao had fought with, had strange looks in their eyes. They stared at Meng Hao, their gazes shining.

Li Ling'er was very pretty, and would be the type of beloved partner that any clan would view as favorable. Furthermore, the backing of the Li Clan would enable Meng Hao to achieve future accomplishments with much greater ease, and he could definitely reach greater heights of glory.

Nobody could understand why Meng Hao would flat-out reject such an opportunity.

Li Ling'er had originally looked forward to seeing Meng Hao reject the offer. But for some reason, when she heard his explanation and saw how serious he was, she suddenly realized that he seemed very different from the scoundrel she remembered. In fact, he seemed to be hiding some great pain deep within him, a fact that caused her to tremble slightly.

"Where is she?" asked Fang Shoudao, sounding very stern. "On Planet South Heaven?" He looked at Meng Hao a bit more seriously than he had before, and his tone was very grave.

"She's not on Planet South Heaven," Meng Hao replied softly. "She's in the cycle of reincarnation, waiting for me to go find her." He could no

longer prevent the grief from showing on his face. All of a sudden, he saw the vague image of a simple young woman standing in front of him, wearing a plain robe. She was the one who had taken him into the world of cultivation.

She wasn't shockingly beautiful, but somehow, she had worked her way into his heart. He had given her a Cosmetic Cultivation Pill, and in the end, they had experienced a Red Wedding together.

She was Xu Qing.

His Qing'er....

She had sacrificed her longevity for him. She had entered reincarnation for him. As she died, she had forced a smile onto her face... for him.

In Meng Hao's arms, she had turned from being beautiful and young into a white-haired old woman. She had withered up and closed her eyes. She had attempted to lift her hand up, as if to wipe the tears off of his face, but then that hand had slumped down lifelessly. That was... the image he saw.

"Her name is Xu Qing," he continued softly. "She's waiting for me in reincarnation, and we made a promise that I would go find her. She... is my wife. My... one and ONLY wife!" With that, he bowed to Fang Shoudao, then turned and flew off, his expression one of pain, grief, and bleakness.

Back in the main hall, everyone was shaken. They could sense the grief in Meng Hao, and could tell that although he usually seemed happy and frivolous on the outside, he was actually filled with a sea of sorrow and longing.

Li Ling'er shivered as she watched Meng Hao leave. As of this moment, the detestation she felt toward him was not so profound, and in fact, deep in her heart, pity took root.

*

Note from Er Gen: I miss Xu Qing....

Chapter 1010: A Wager!

After several days of banqueting, the Three Great Daoist Societies left, as did all of the other various sects and clans. The matter of the wedding contract with the Li Clan wasn't resolved. Fang Shoudao wouldn't waver in the matter, however, and continued to press for time.

Over the course of a few days, Fang Shoudao summoned Meng Hao on multiple occasions, but Meng Hao was in a different position than he had been. He wasn't just any young lord of the clan, he was now a blazing sun.

Therefore, he completely ignored Fang Shoudao, putting the matter off by focusing on cultivating the Nirvana Fruits.

Three days later, as he sat in secluded meditation in his residence, Fang Shoudao came for a personal visit. As soon as he entered the courtyard, he sent his aura out, and Meng Hao immediately opened his eyes.

It was in that moment that Fang Shoudao appeared in front of him. His face was grave as he looked Meng Hao over. Then he let out a long sigh and sat down cross-legged.

Meng Hao sat in place quietly, not saying a word.

"She's really that important to you?" Fang Shoudao asked slowly, looking at Meng Hao. Meng Hao was actually extremely important to Fang Shoudao, so important that Meng Hao didn't even realize the extent of it.

To Fang Shoudao, the most crucial matter at hand was ensuring that the Fang Clan was able to survive over the next thousand years.

After that, he wanted to help Meng Hao grow and mature. That was one reason why he didn't refuse the Three Great Daoist Societies' proposal. He believed that in the Three Great Daoist Societies, Meng Hao would definitely acquire better cultivation magic than he could in the Fang Clan.

As for the clan's financial predicament, that was something in which he had not deceived Meng Hao.

"She's my wife," Meng Hao replied, his voice soft, his head bowed.

After a moment of silence, Fang Shoudao spoke. Although he didn't sound somber like he had when negotiating prices with Meng Hao, his tone of voice and his expression seemed far more serious and intense than they had at that time.

"Can't you just let her go? You're the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. Just forget about her.

"If you can't let go of her forever," he said quietly, "then how about for just a thousand years? If you don't like the Li Clan lass, then you don't have to pay attention to her at all. All the clan wants is an alliance. It's the same with the Li Clan. They just want an alliance.

"The marriage is just a formality."

Meng Hao looked up at Fang Shoudao for a moment, then slapped his bag of holding to produce the Ancient Realm precious treasure that was his Crown Prince command medallion. He rubbed it for a moment before carefully placing it down in front of Fang Shoudao.

Fang Shoudao's eyes widened, and waves of rage began to surge out inside of him. He looked at Meng Hao, his expression one of pain.

"In your heart, is that girl really more important than the entire clan?" The disappointment on Fang Shoudao's face was clear. This was true disappointment, not an act like before.

"Patriarch....

"I don't remember much about my early life on Planet East Victory," he murmured. "What I do remember from my childhood is that my dad and mom left. I have a memory of searching for them in the fog, crying because I couldn't find them.

"After I grew up, I took the Imperial examinations over and over again. Back then, my dream was to be rich when I grew up.

"Eventually I ran into her, and I joined a sect. That was how came to be part of the cultivation world.

"She's actually my Senior Sister from that sect." After that, Meng Hao

told Fang Shoudao everything about Xu Qing. He recounted all the stories and all the details that he could remember.

“Patriarch, there was one time in which I died. She ruined her own longevity, just to save me....

“When we got married, it was a Red Wedding, soaked in blood....

“I promised her that I would find her in reincarnation.” As his voice echoed out, filled with the sensation of memories, Fang Shoudao’s face gradually softened. He looked at Meng Hao for a long moment, then sighed.

“It’s just a formality,” he said, closing his eyes. “Why do you have to be like this?!”

“To the clan, it might just be a formality,” Meng Hao replied calmly. “But to me, it would be a betrayal. Patriarch, please appoint someone else as the Crown Prince. The Li Clan doesn’t want a beloved partner for Li Ling’er. All they want is an alliance. It doesn’t matter who it is. Anyone could be a match for her. Why does it have to be me? So please, just appoint someone else. It would be the perfect solution for the clan.”

Fang Shoudao maintained his silence. After a long moment, he rose to his feet and swished his sleeve. He did not take the Crown Prince command medallion, but instead sent it floating back into Meng Hao’s palm.

“In three months, the Three Great Daoist Societies will come for you. I’ve already prepared 1,500,000,000 spirit stones for you to take with you to use in your cultivation. I wasn’t going to tell you about this originally, but considering you can’t accept the marriage, well... do you dare to make a little wager with me?

“If you win, then I’ll take responsibility to cancel the marriage contract!

“But if you lose, then you can’t reject the arrangements made by the clan, and you’ll go through with the formalities!”

Meng Hao stood there silently.

“Hao’er,” Fang Shoudao continued with a sigh, “if your grandfather was still here in the clan, he would definitely persuade you for me....” Fang Shoudao thought of Meng Hao’s grandfather, who was actually the person that he had most favored among the junior generations. In fact, in his view, Meng Hao’s grandfather would have eventually become the clan’s third Dao Realm expert!

A tremor ran through Meng Hao as he recalled the vague image of his grandfather, an image he would never be able to forget.

Meng Hao’s parents had left to guard Planet South Heaven for 100,000 years. As for his grandfather, he had gone to search for an Outsider to ask for help. The Outsider came, but his grandfather had gone missing, and had never made contact with the clan again.

Feeling quite bitter, Meng Hao looked up at Fang Shoudao.

“What’s the bet!?”

“Before the Three Great Daoist Societies arrive, do everything you can to earn 1,500,000,000 spirit stones. Immortal jade doesn’t count. If you can do that, from then on the clan won’t require that you do anything you don’t want to.

“You must not resort to trickery, theft, or borrowing. I won’t interfere either.”

Meng Hao stared in shock for a moment. Then, he lowered his head and made some calculations. When he looked back up, his expression was calm again. Gazing at Fang Shoudao with a slightly pained expression, he nodded.

Fang Shoudao said nothing further. He stood up, turned, and vanished.

After he left, Meng Hao began to breathe heavily. A thousand ideas were running through his head. He knew that he was a member of the clan, and that it was impossible to sever that blood connection. His parents, his grandfather, and his other relatives would not agree to him severing ties with the Fang Clan.

Furthermore... the clan had not given Meng Hao any reason to do

anything that would violate the rules.

If there was a wager, he would win it!

“Three months.... 1,500,000,000 spirit stones.” Although he wasn’t aware of it, a bashful expression had appeared on his face at some point. As far as he was concerned, winning that bet... wouldn’t be difficult at all.

He put away the Crown Prince command medallion and stood up. Then he turned into a beam of prismatic light that shot away to find Fang Xi.

Two days later, word began to spread throughout the Fang Clan. It didn’t take long before all the clan members were talking about the same thing.

“Did you hear? The Crown Prince is going to challenge the Medicine Pavilion!! Last time, he got through six levels with perfect marks! The Dao bell even rang!”

“Last time he challenged the Medicine Pavilion, he got to the seventh level, where he grafted 75,000 types of medicinal plants!”

“Everyone is saying that this time, the Crown Prince is definitely going to charge all the way to the tenth level!!”

The news quickly spread, until everyone in the clan had heard about it. All of them were inwardly shaken. Lately, Meng Hao was the like the sun at high noon within the clan, and was the focus of all attention.

Everything he said or did was noticed. Besides, the glory he had already achieved in the Dao of Alchemy Division was well known. Now that he was going to be heading back there, everyone in the clan was filled with anticipation.

That anticipation reached a peak on one particular morning at dawn, when Meng Hao flew out of his residence and headed toward the Dao of Alchemy Division, his Immortal Realm Paragon cultivation base surging with power.

He was followed by numerous members of the Fang Clan, who all wanted to witness the spectacle.

More and more people started to tag along. By the time he reached the

Dao of Alchemy Division, huge amounts of Fang Clan cultivators were there, filling the sky as he headed toward the Medicine Pavilion.

The alchemists and apprentice alchemists of the Dao of Alchemy Division were all very excited as they joined in the procession.

The entire Dao of Alchemy Division was abuzz. Countless beams of colorful light shot through the air as Meng Hao landed outside of the Medicine Pavilion. He looked at the huge stone stele next to the entrance, and his eyes glittered. The same two old men who stood guard outside opened their eyes. When they saw Meng Hao, they slowly rose to their feet, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Greetings, Crown Prince,” they said in unison.

Meng Hao nodded, and without further word, stepped into the Medicine Pavilion.

As he did, the entire area was packed with clan members, all of whom were waiting to watch. Fang Xi was in the crowd. He quickly sent word out via jade slip, and a moment later, roughly 10,000 clan members rose up in various positions and began to cry out.

“The Crown Prince is challenging the Medicine Pavilion! This is a grand event in the Fang Clan, and it is an honor for anyone to be able to bear witness. I personally wish to offer 100 spirit stones as a congratulatory gift! If anyone else is willing to offer a similar gift, please place it into this bag of holding!”

“That’s right! I don’t have a lot of spirit stones, but I’m willing to give fifty as a gift of congratulations to the Crown Prince!”

“Of course this is how things should work! The Crown Prince is challenging the Medicine Pavilion. As fellow clan members, it’s only natural that we should offer gifts of congratulations! Here’s 100 spirit stones!”

As the calls rang out, more people produced spirit stones to place in the bags of holding. Others hesitated, but then increasing numbers began to do the same thing.

Very soon, a terrifying amount of spirit stones had built up within the bags of holding.

When Fang Shoudao saw what was happening, he stared in shock for a moment and then smacked his forehead. His expression immediately changed.

“Dammit! How could I have forgotten.... I remember hearing about how Meng Hao charged people in the Dao of Alchemy Division to hear his lectures about plants and vegetation!” Then Fang Shoudao thought about the rewards posted for the three Holy medicinal pills, and a feeling of alarm built up in his heart.

Those three medicinal pills included first, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, which Meng Hao had already concocted. The second was the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill, the reward for which was 1,000,000,000 spirit stones....

The third was the Heavenly Thought Pill. The incredible reward for concocting that pill was to become the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division. All of a sudden, Fang Shoudao gasped. After a long moment, he managed to recover his senses, and realized that this time, he had been conned by Meng Hao.

“You little hoodlum!” he thought, laughing bitterly. However, his eyes quickly glittered.

“However, he didn’t choose to go concoct the pills,” he murmured, “but instead, to challenge the Medicine Pavilion. That indicates that he’s not completely confident in his concocting abilities.... In that case, I haven’t necessarily lost the bet....” However, he still was a bit worried, so he suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was in the Medicine Immortal Sect, where he went to consult with Fang Yanxu.

Not too long after, he left the Medicine Immortal Sect, and his face was very calm. Based on what Fang Yanxu told him, he was now confident in what would happen.

“Not even Fang Yanxu can concoct the Heavenly Thought Pill. As for the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill, it’s equally difficult. The little hoodlum

definitely can't concoct them relying on his own skill alone. I told him that I wouldn't interfere, but that doesn't mean I can't use other methods."

Fang Shoudao appeared to be very pleased, and looked more like a crafty old fox than ever.

Chapter 1011: Challenging the Medicine Pavilion Again!

Dao of Alchemy Division. Medicine Pavilion.

As soon as Meng Hao set foot inside, he was once again on the seventh level.

Last time, he passed six levels in a row, achieving the highest marks possible at each level. He passed them perfectly. Notably, on the sixth level, each step he took caused lotuses to bloom, shocking the outside world and causing the Dao bell to toll.

Now he had returned, and in addition to his desire to earn some money, he was filled with determination, as well as dedication to the Dao of alchemy.

“This time, I’m definitely going to go through all nine levels!” Everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea knew that Meng Hao was an Immortal Realm Paragon, but few people were aware that that his skill in the Dao of alchemy had reached a point of perfection that could only be described by the saying, “the pill furnace flame turned blue.” 1

The last time he was on the seventh level, he had grafted 75,000 medicinal plants and yet, his mental focus had been insufficient. If he had persisted in continuing, he would have sustained mental injuries; the concentration required to pass that level perfectly required an incredible level of mental constitution.

Furthermore, at that time, Meng Hao’s skill with plants and vegetation had not reached a state of perfection. However, he was now much more skilled regarding the numerous variations of plants and vegetation in the Fang Clan. Furthermore, the difference between his current cultivation base and his former one was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. Meng Hao was now completely confident that he could pass all the way through the ninth floor!

Inside the Medicine Pavilion, mists swirled everywhere. The Classic of

Plants and Vegetation appeared, glowing with boundless light. The first pages flipped over, and Meng Hao waved his finger, causing a single medicinal plant to appear. His eyes shone with the glow of augury, and in the blink of an eye, he began to produce new grafts.

Eventually, he began to merge the grafts together to produce entirely new medicinal plants.

Time passed.

This time, Meng Hao only used half a day to graft 75,000 medicinal plants, whereupon the mists churned, and rumbling sounds could be heard.

The rumbling could even be heard outside of the Medicine Pavilion, where a bright light shone from the entire pavilion, rising up into the air above the Dao of Alchemy Division. It was as if the light was building up pressure, waiting for Meng Hao to reach the pinnacle of the level, whereupon it would burst up into the sky. All of the alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division were paying rapt attention.

Fang Danyun was there on his mountain peak, looking over with an expression of anticipation.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he extended his hand and continued to graft.

80,000. 83,000. 86,000.... Eight hours later, he had grafted 90,000 medicinal plants!

Massive rumbling sounds could be heard coming from the Medicine Pavilion. To date, no one had ever been able to graft as many plants as Meng Hao had in the seventh level. He was the first one to ever do so! Currently, his name appeared on the stone stele outside of the Medicine Pavilion, and the number of medicinal plants he had grafted was clearly visible to all of the other clan members, causing a huge commotion among them.

90,000. However, that wasn't the end! The drain on Meng Hao's mental faculties was barely even noticeable. His mental constitution had greatly

increased compared to before. His eyes glittered, and he lifted both hands, multitasking as he used both hands to graft different medicinal plants!

Rumbling like that of thunder could be heard outside the Medicine Pavilion as the number of grafted plants next to Meng Hao's name increased.

93,000. 96,000. 99,000.... All the way to... 100,000!

When the last grafted medicinal plant appeared, Meng Hao was surrounded by 100,000 swirling plants. They let out incredible light that spread out of the Medicine Pavilion, shooting up into the air in a brilliant beam.

The light instantly shot high up into the air above the Dao of Alchemy Division, causing everything to tremble. The entire Fang Clan was shaken, and all of the cultivators on Planet East Victory could see the light. Even the alchemists in the Medicine Immortal Sect were shocked.

As for Fang Yanxu, although he was in secluded meditation, he opened his eyes and looked over toward the Dao of Alchemy Division, clearly moved.

"He passed the seventh level perfectly..." he murmured lightly. "Well, the eighth level is so difficult it can't even compare to the seventh. They're completely different."

Meanwhile, the Fang Clan's Dao bell appeared in the air above the ancestral mansion. Immediately, its toll echoed out into the minds of all clan members with Fang Clan blood, deep and sonorous.

The toll of the Dao bell indicated that Meng Hao had passed the seventh level in exactly the same way that he had passed the sixth... perfectly!

Furthermore, it had only taken him one day!

Word rapidly spread that he had passed the seventh level perfectly, having grafted 100,000 medicinal plants. The members of the Fang Clan suddenly realized that their Crown Prince was not just a blazing sun in terms of cultivation, he was also a blazing sun when it came to skill in the Dao of alchemy!

Meng Hao had no way to hear or see the uproar in the outside world. Up ahead, light swirled throughout the seventh level, causing a staircase to appear, a staircase that led up to the eighth level!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Eyes filled with determination, he stepped onto the stairs and began to climb up.

Immediately, all the light around him vanished, and Meng Hao found himself looking out at a huge desert. The sky stretched out limitlessly, and up ahead, he could see an azure-colored dragon. It lay there completely motionless, as if it were a corpse.

The dragon was so huge that one glance was not enough to take in the entire thing. Upon closer inspection, it could be seen that it was actually composed of countless medicinal plants that were apparently growing on the dragon's body, using its flesh and blood as nourishment.

He was standing near the tail of the dragon, but even from there, he could sense the terrifying life force that existed inside of it. However, that life force was sealed, and was apparently being absorbed bit by bit by the numerous medicinal plants.

"This is the eighth level?" he thought. Almost at the same time, a cold, archaic voice spoke, echoing out through the entire eighth level.

"1,000,000 medicinal plants grow upon this Azure Dragon. Separate 100,000, and you can pass this level!"

Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright light as he looked at the Azure Dragon. Gradually, a look of obsession appeared in his eyes.

"In the seventh level, you have to graft various medicinal plants. In the eighth level, you are faced with numerous grafted medicinal plants that you have to deconstruct!

"Return them into their original state, into the original medicinal plants. The level of difficulty here... is far, far greater than the seventh level!

"However, if I can pass this level perfectly, then my skill with plants and vegetation would reach an unprecedented level!

“I can’t even imagine a level of difficulty regarding knowledge of plants and vegetation that exceeds this eighth level.” Meng Hao’s heart surged with the determination to face this challenge head-on. He took a deep breath and stepped forward. As soon as his foot touched the ground, brilliant light flickered, and an illusory medicinal plant appeared in front of him, blocking his way.

He looked at it for a moment, then waved his finger, causing the medicinal plant to break apart into three distinct plants, after which it faded away.

Without even pausing, he continued forward. Every step he took caused more medicinal plants to appear. Each and every one took only a single glance before it was deconstructed.

10 steps. 100 steps. 1,000 steps. 10,000 steps....

Time passed. Meng Hao eventually took 30,000 steps, which indicated that he had deconstructed 30,000 medicinal plants. As he proceeded along, the Azure Dragon beneath his feet began to show indications that it was awakening.

From the look of it, if someone could deconstruct all 1,000,000 medicinal plants, then the dragon... would no longer be sealed, and would once again be able to fly through the Heavens.

Outside of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao’s name appeared on the stone stele, among the relatively few other names that had reached the eighth level. Everyone looked on, wide-eyed, as his name quickly climbed up the list.

Booms emanated out from the Medicine Pavilion, filling the ears of all onlookers. When they heard it, it almost seemed as if the sounds could control the beating of their hearts, which caused the entire Dao of Alchemy Division to fall silent.

All eyes were completely fixed on the Medicine Pavilion.

Meng Hao proceeded forward along the Azure Dragon in the eighth level. 15,000 steps. 18,000 steps. 20,000 steps!

30,000. 40,000. 50,000....

He didn't even pause a single time. Step after step, he deconstructed medicinal plants. Because of his skill with plants and vegetation, none of these medicinal plants were even qualified to cause him to spend time thinking.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

The sound filled the Dao of Alchemy Division, and gradually began to resemble the roar of a dragon. By this point, Meng Hao... had taken his 70,000th step!

Step by step, plant by plant. He continued onward as relentlessly as ever. 80,000. 90,000. 100,000!

By taking his 100,000th step, it indicated that he had separated 100,000 medicinal plants from the Azure Dragon, which was now beginning to glow with brilliant light, and even tremble slightly.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes glittered brightly. Naturally, 100,000 was not his limit. If he had never come to this place, none of this would have mattered, but now that he was here... he wanted to reach the pinnacle!

A tremor ran through him, and he took another step forward. Slowly but surely, he continued onward. 100,000. 150,000. 200,000. 300,000. 400,000. 500,000!

The Azure Dragon's trembling grew more intense, and the roars were now echoing out through all of Heaven and Earth.

The members of the Fang Clan outside the Medicine Pavilion were completely shaken as they watched Meng Hao's name climbing up the stone stele. It had long since reached first place, but the thing that really caused the onlookers to be amazed were the numbers that stood next to his name.

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a strange light as he continued on. 550,000. 600,000. 700,000. 800,000....

When he reached 800,000, his pace began to slow. However, at this point his energy surged even more explosively than before. He was now drawing on all of his mental constitution. His eyes glowed with a mad light of augury. The level of skill with plants and vegetation that was on display here was intense as he drew on everything to proceed onward.

830,000. 860,000. 890,000....

900,000!

The Azure Dragon roared; it was now ninety percent awake, and a shocking aura emanated out from the eighth level. It almost seemed to be pleading with Meng Hao to complete the final 100,000 deconstructions, so that it could be free to fly among the Heavens.

A tense silence reigned outside of the Medicine Pavilion as all eyes focused on the numbers on the stone stele. It was as if everyone was waiting for that number to reach 1,000,000!

Meng Hao suddenly looked up. The level of difficulty here was incredible, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. When it came to these final 100,000 medicinal plants, each one of them was made up of dozens and even hundreds of other medicinal plants.

He took a deep breath, and within him, his Immortal meridians exploded with power, fortifying his mental constitution. An intense Immortal will caused his Immortal qi to swirl, and his eyes glittered as if with starlight as he continued onward.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

91,000. 92,000. 93,000.... 97,000. 98,000. 99,000!!

Countless medicinal plants appeared in front of him, all of which he separated from the dragon. He lost track of time, and it almost seemed like the medicinal plants would never end. But then, all of a sudden, there were none. Meng Hao stopped in place.

1,000,000!!

When he finished the 1,000,000th medicinal plant, massive roaring

filled the eighth level. The entire Medicine Pavilion emanated azure light as the illusory image of an azure dragon roared a shocking roar.

The members of the Fang Clan who were watching outside the Medicine Pavilion were thrown into tumult.

“1,000,000! The Crown Prince reached 1,000,000 on the eighth level!!”

“This is unheard-of! No one has ever done that in the history of the Dao of Alchemy Division!”

“The Crown Prince is a Chosen in cultivation and a blazing sun in the Dao of alchemy!!”

*

1. “The pill furnace flame turning blue” is a Chinese idiom based on the beliefs of ancient Chinese alchemists, who thought that when the flame of their pill furnace turned blue when concocting, it was a perfect success. It’s now an expression that means “to reach a point of perfection”.

Chapter 1012: Opening the Essence Door

On that day, virtually every member of the Fang Clan saw an Azure Dragon fly out of the Medicine Pavilion in the Dao of Alchemy Division, then speed around Planet East Victory before eventually fading away.

As it vanished, motes of green light sprinkled down onto the lands of Planet East Victory, causing the entire planet to thrum with life force.

This scene caused the hearts of all the cultivators on Planet East Victory to tremble with shock.

In the Medicine Immortal Sect, Fang Yanxu saw what was happening and his expression flickered with astonishment. He gazed in the direction of the Dao of Alchemy Division and murmured after a long time, "So the legends about the eighth level are true.... The first alchemist to completely unseal the Azure Dragon of plants and vegetation, will free the dragon and enable it to nourish the lands.

"Meng Hao's skill in the Dao of alchemy has reached an incredible level...."

Fang Shoudao took a deep breath. His eyes were wide as he watched the Azure Dragon fade away, and the nourishing motes of light fall down onto the planet. He even reached his hand out and allowed one of the glimmering lights to land onto his palm.

Simultaneously, the Dao bell appeared in midair over the ancestral mansion. Its toll echoed out into the hearts of all the members of the Fang Clan.

Then the hubbub of conversation broke out, in all areas of the Fang Clan. After experiencing the rebellion, the Fang Clan needed a joyous occasion like this to consolidate the clan and help them grow stronger.

On the eighth level of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao watched as the unsealed Azure Dragon swirled around and then flew away. Next, the plants and vegetation disappeared into the numerous glittering screens which had just appeared.

Meng Hao did not immediately proceed to the next level. He sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes, mentally reviewing the 1,000,000 medicinal plants he had just seen, and committing them to memory.

After quite a bit of time passed, he opened his eyes, within which glowed an intense light. Having completed the eighth level perfectly, he looked off into the distance at... a door which had appeared!

There was no staircase, only a door, and that door led to the ninth level!
The final level!

“The Fang Clan’s Medicine Pavilion is truly a place where good fortune can be wrested away from Heaven and Earth. The transformations of plants and vegetation here have reached the pinnacle, especially on the eighth level.

“Well, I wonder what kind of test I’ll find on the ninth level?” He looked curiously at the door for a while before finally rising to his feet and walking over.

Eventually, he came to stand directly in front of it. Eyes glittering, he pushed it open and walked in without hesitation. This was the final level of the Medicine Pavilion.

As soon as he entered, he stopped in his tracks and stared around in shock.

An entire world stretched out in front of his eyes.

The sky was deep blue, and a golden sun hung in the sky, sending out radiant sunlight. Gigantic birds flew about in the sky.

Off in the distance, the ground shook under the feet of a giant, which roared as it ran.

Everything bore the appearance of ancient times. There was one particular plant, a small one, that was growing out from under a rock. It seemed ordinary and not even worth mentioning, but if you looked closely... it appeared as if, at some point in the past, the rock had crushed the plant. However, the plant had fought on, eventually pushing the rock

aside and growing up from under its edges.

Meng Hao was a bit taken aback by everything. However, after only a few breaths of time passed, everything blurred. When things became clear again, he was standing in the same place he had been before. However, the mountains and lands around him had crumbled, even that rock. The little plant he had seen had also collapsed into pieces.

Yet, one of those plant pieces managed to fly up into the air and merge with some of the remnants of the shattered rock, which then spun off into the distance, where they landed in the middle of a pool of water and sank to the bottom.

Time passed. Years flew by, and it was impossible to tell how many. Gradually, another small plant grew up from within the pool of water. It looked different than the previous plant, sturdier and more resilient.

Meng Hao frowned. He wasn't sure exactly what he was seeing, nor what it had to do with this ninth level. He continued to watch as time flashed by. Suns rose and set. The plant would wither, then grow again, a seemingly endless cycle. Finally one day, the lands were destroyed in a seismic event, and the area where the plant was growing turned into a seafloor.

Soil became sludge, completely burying the tiny plant.

More time passed. The little plant once again grew up from within the sludge. It looked different than before, as if it were some type of seaweed. It looked almost like hair as it grew longer and longer.

Later, the sea dried up, and the plant withered and eventually disappeared. Then, a tree grew up in its place. That tree became a forest, within which was a tree that seemed to be the same tiny plant from years ago.

Time flowed. Meng Hao watched as the huge tree eventually began to grow smaller. The other trees around it withered in death, but it grew stronger and stronger until, eventually, it attracted the attention of lightning.

The lightning struck it, and it dried up. In the moment that it died, a sprout appeared, which became the only green thing in the whole world, growing up out of the dead husk of the tree.

Meng Hao stared at the sprout in shock. A powerful aura gradually began to emanate from the sprout, and after much time passed, a hand appeared in the void, which slowly reached out and harvested the tiny sprout.

“Sure enough, it became a Holy medicinal plant,” said an ancient voice, the same voice that had spoken on the previous levels of the Medicine pavilion. The images Meng Hao was seeing crumbled away.

He breathed heavily as everything faded away, and he found himself standing in a medicinal plant garden, within which grew a single medicinal plant.

It was a tiny sprout, the same one whose lives Meng Hao had seen passing by in his vision.

He stared at the sprout in shock, and a thoughtful expression appeared on his face.

“Do you understand?” asked the voice.

“What is the highest realm of plants and vegetation? No one can truly answer this question. Everyone has their own explanation!

“A tiny plant from the ancient age that experienced all sorts of good fortune... Who can say whether or not that plant will become some sort of shocking holy medicinal plant?!

“All living things are mundane, and yet, all living things can also be extraordinary!

“Cultivators practice cultivation because of their desire to shed the limitations of the mortal world. They wish to be like the carp that leapt over the dragon gate.... Plants and vegetation are similar. When concocting them into medicinal pills and consuming them, one should not solely focus on strengthening themselves, but should also strive to sense the plant’s fundamental will.

“It might seem like the plant dies in the process of becoming a pill, but who can truly say whether or not this is just a rebirth into another stage of life for them?”

As the ancient voice echoed out, Meng Hao sat down cross-legged and looked at the tiny sprout. All of a sudden, he thought about the image of the first generation Patriarch incarnated as a planet.

He became a planet, from which grew countless types of plants and vegetation....

“This....” Meng Hao murmured. He felt as if he were just on the verge of grasping something profound, but he wasn’t able to put it into words. It was as if countless threads were swirling around in his head, making it impossible to find the correct train of thought.

“Reincarnation?” he said, looking up.

Almost as soon as the word left his mouth, the entire world collapsed. The fragments then formed back together, causing another shocking vision to appear.

The vision was exactly the same as what he had experienced when he first set foot into the ninth level. He saw the world of ancient times, and he saw the tiny plant growing up from under the rock.

The vision appeared to be identical, except that this time, the hand was present, as if he was now seeing the true beginning to the story.

A voice echoed out within the vision: “Stuck under a boulder, but you still want to live and grow. Well then, allow me to give you a chance at life.”

The hand then tapped the plant lightly.

The little plant swayed, then returned to normal. The hand vanished, as if it had never existed in the first place.

The vision faded away, and the void of the ninth level appeared again. The ancient voice echoed out again.

“It’s not just reincarnation, but creation! From my perspective, the

pinnacle of plants and vegetation is actually creation.” After the voice finished speaking, a door appeared next to Meng Hao, a door which led to the outside.

Meng Hao maintained his silence. The little plant had been ordinary, but because it had been tapped by that finger, its entire life and fate changed. In the end, the lightning struck it, and it became a Holy medicinal plant.

That definitely was a kind of creation.

After a long time, Meng Hao rose to his feet, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

Suddenly, the ancient voice spoke again.

“If you had the choice, would you wish to become that little plant, or would you want to become the hand?”

Meng Hao paused and looked out into the void. Voice calm, he replied, “Neither that plant nor that hand can act of their own accord. Both are controlled by something else. I would want to become... the person who commanded that hand to alter the little plant!” With that, he turned and prepared to step through the door.

Suddenly, the ancient voice in the void laughed. It was a laughter filled with happiness and praise.

“To think that... the Fang Clan has produced someone like you. Delightful! How very delightful!” As the voice echoed out, the image of a middle-aged man suddenly appeared within the void. He looked over at Meng Hao.

“For years, none of the few people who managed to enter this place made a choice like yours.

“Your reward for reaching this ninth level is that I can answer a single question for you.”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered.

“Is there a pinnacle of skill with plants and vegetation that exceeds that of creation?” he asked.

“That’s not an easy question to answer,” the middle-aged man said slowly. “First, you must be able to understand... what the Dao is!”

“The Dao?” Meng Hao gaped.

“Why is there life? Why is there death?” The ancient voiced echoed back and forth endlessly.

“Why is there reincarnation? It’s like a circle, with the head and the tail connected, but what exactly does that mean, and is reincarnation the only explanation?

“Why are there cultivators? Why are there cultivation Realms?

“Why is there Daoist magic? Why are there divine abilities?

“How does light shine? How does darkness descend?

“Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. What are the differences between these elements?

“Fire is fire, and yet, why are there different types of heat?

“What is heat? What is cold? What does it mean when something that can only survive in the ice can be burned to death by a single drop of water?”

The ancient voice spoke with increasing speed, causing Meng Hao’s mind to tremble. Questions piled up in his mind. Each one seemed possible to answer directly, but if he actually had to answer them, he would be left speechless.

“What is the Dao?” That was the final question uttered by the ancient voice, and it left Meng Hao’s mind rumbling.

“The Essence is the Dao, the basis of everything that defies Heaven!” A bright light shone in the middle-aged man’s eyes, and he suddenly seemed very serious.

“All such unknowns are Essence. Only when you seek out the Essence, can you comprehend Heaven and Earth, understand all living things, and control everything! When you understand all transformations of Heaven and Earth, when you have defied the Heavens, when you have sealed the

Earth, then what could possibly be difficult to you?!" The middle-aged man waved his hand, and Meng Hao's mind trembled. He couldn't stop himself from stepping into the door, and then he vanished into the void.

After he disappeared, the middle-aged man shook his head and smiled, then stepped forward into the medicinal plant garden. He sat down cross-legged and gradually transformed into a tiny sprout.

He was... the final transformation of that little plant. A tiny sprout!

Chapter 1013: Planning to Escape the Marriage!

“I look forward to the day when he becomes the person who controls that hand!” The sprout swayed back and forth, and faint laughter could be heard echoing out into the darkness of the void.

The option of becoming the plant or the hand seemed like a choice, but it was actually a trick question. Although there appeared to be two answers to pick from, in reality, those two answers were one and the same.

That was especially true after one’s mind was reeling after experiencing the shocking visions. Before that feeling even faded away, when one had not had a chance to digest the experience, and the heart was still unstable, whatever decision was made would clearly reveal the nature of one’s Dao, and the focus of one’s heart.

It was not a time in which random or careless things could be said. If one responded in an absurd way that did not correspond to the object of their obsession, it would be like a betrayal of oneself and result in the collapse of their Dao will.

Therefore, for someone to escape the trap and to respond that they wanted to become the person who controlled the hand was something completely remarkable. Any person who entered the ninth level of the Medicine Pavilion and faced that middle-aged man’s divine ability, and who had a cultivation base lower than him, would be incapable of speaking lies. The only thing they would be capable of doing was speaking the truth from the bottom of their heart. That was the only way to pass the ninth level!

It required not only utter self-confidence, but also total clarity of self. Furthermore, it required those who answered the question to have an unshakable belief in their own Dao!

That middle-aged man had not seen a member of the Fang Clan like that in a long time. Therefore, he decided to provide some enlightenment

regarding the Dao of Essence!

“Essence IS the Dao!” thought Meng Hao. His mind rumbled as he stepped out of the door. In the blink of an eye, he was outside of the medicine Pavilion, surrounded by tens of thousands of clan members, all of whom were looking at Meng Hao, their faces filled with excitement.

The toll of the Dao bell could be heard, filling the minds of all members of the Fang Clan.

Behind Meng Hao, brilliant light shot up from the Medicine Pavilion to illuminate everything. All of the alchemists on Planet East Victory clasped hands and bowed toward Meng Hao. The sky went dark.

That was the first time that anyone had perfectly passed through the entire Medicine Pavilion. It would definitely become a legend in the Dao of Alchemy Division, part of the mythos of the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy.

Meng Hao’s name was now listed in the very first position on the stone stele outside of the Medicine Pavilion!

However, all of the cheering barely registered in his ears. The words he had just heard filled his ears and continued to crash around in his mind like thunder.

“Essence... is the Dao....” he murmured.

“Comprehend Essence, and you can step into the Dao Realm!” It was as if Meng Hao’s mind had been opened further, making his understanding of cultivation clearer than ever.

“Use the Nirvana Fruits to enter the Ancient Realm. Use Essence to form the Dao Realm!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with brilliant light as the ancient voice slowly echoed away into silence. Outside of the Medicine Pavilion, the cries of the clan members gradually grew stronger in Meng Hao’s ears.

“Congratulations, on charging through the whole Medicine Pavilion, Crown Prince!”

“Congratulations, Crown Prince!”

As the cries echoed out, Meng Hao gradually recovered his senses. Soon,

he was staring around in shock. Something seemed... off. There didn't seem to be enough people in the area. There were tens of thousands, and no more....

From what he could remember, when he entered the Medicine Pavilion, there had been hundreds of thousands, perhaps even more, spread about in all directions. Feeling suspicious, Meng Hao smiled at the crowds, clasped hands, and bowed. Then he gave Fang Xi a meaningful look, and sped off into the distance.

Fang Xi followed nervously. The two of them flew out of the Dao of Alchemy Division, and before Meng Hao could even ask him any questions, Fang Xi sighed.

"Coz, something happened. After you entered the Medicine Pavilion, the clan suddenly announced a bunch of important missions. Almost all of the clan members who came to watch immediately had to go back to the clan...." Smiling wryly, Fang Xi produced a bag of holding which he handed over to Meng Hao.

Face unsightly, Meng Hao grabbed the bag of holding and scanned it. There were quite a few spirit stones inside, but it was a lot less than he had expected. It didn't take much thought to come to the conclusion that this was definitely a counterstrike from that old fox Fang Shoudao. He turned to stare angrily at the ancestral mansion.

"That old hoodlum!" Meng Hao growled, gnashing his teeth. "That wily old fox!!"

Obviously, the old fogey had figured out that he was being conned by Meng Hao, and had devised an ingenious counterattack.

"Well, it doesn't matter," said Meng Hao, forcing a smile onto his face as he clapped Fang Xi on the shoulder. "You head back now, and I'll start working on another plan."

Fang Xi nodded. After bowing to Meng Hao, he transformed into a colorful beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao hovered in midair, eyes flickering, jaw clenched.

“Since you want to force my hand so badly, you old fox,” he thought, “don’t blame the Young Master for flipping over the game board!” Musing about how the first generation Patriarch had stared down Ji Tian, he turned into a prismatic beam that shot back toward the ancestral mansion.

Back in his residence, he sat down cross-legged.

After a few days passed, in the dead of night, he flickered and disappeared from within his residence and materialized outside of the ancestral mansion, where he transformed into a beam of light that shot soundlessly up into the sky.

Just when he seemed to be on the verge of bursting out into the starry sky, a powerful force bore down on him. It was like a sealing power, which spread out in all directions, forcing him to come to a stop. All he could do now was look out at the starry sky, his expression unsightly.

“So, the old fox already prepared for the possibility of me fleeing before the wedding day. From the look of things, the old fogey intentionally asked the Three Great Daoist Societies to wait for three months before coming back for me. It was all a setup!” He gritted his teeth as put all the pieces of the puzzle together. He was not happy to have been conned multiple times by Fang Shoudao. It was the feeling of being defeated by someone else in the field which you considered yourself to be most skilled at.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, and his eyes glittered. Deep inside, he was actually laughing as he turned and headed back to the clan. He settled down in the ancestral mansion, and made no further attempts to escape the marriage. Nor did he go to concoct medicinal pills. Instead, he spent all of his time poring through the clan’s ancient records, and reading through its history.

Fang Shoudao was puzzled by this behavior. During recent days, he had been constantly observing Meng Hao with divine sense. He even saw him attempt to fly away, the result of which left him feeling very pleased.

But now, he couldn’t figure him out.

“I can’t underestimate this fox cub,” he thought. “If I overlook the tiniest

thing, I could end up falling into his con.” Fang Shoudao wore a very serious expression. He attempted to study the same ancient records that Meng Hao had looked at. However, he didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary, which only served to increase his caution.

An entire month passed in this fashion. Fang Shoudao was starting to get a very bad feeling. However, no matter how much thought he put into it, he couldn’t put his finger on what exactly the problem was.

Currently, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his residence. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and they were shot with blood. His complexion was a bit wan as well. However, inside, he was laughing coldly.

“That’s it! I’ve figured it out!” he murmured to himself.

“During Divine Soul Nourishment, all of Planet East Victory will be covered by ripples that block Dao Realm divine sense for one breath of time. It is also during Divine Soul Nourishment that the One Thought Stellar Transformation... can be used to perform a Stellar Teleportation!

“Therefore, now is the time... to concoct some pills!” His eyes glittered for a moment before he closed them. The next morning at dawn, he rose to his feet and then shot toward the Dao of Alchemy Division in a beam of light.

For the entire past month, Fang Shoudao had been completely on edge. He knew that something was going on with Meng Hao, so as soon as he saw him fly out of his residence, he focused all of his divine sense on him. When he saw that he was heading toward the Dao of Alchemy Division, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“Hmph. What scares me is not you making your move, fox cub. What makes me nervous is when you do nothing, making it impossible to pick up on any clues. You’re just too immature.” A wide smile appeared on Fang Shoudao’s face. He was clearly very pleased with himself.

“So, it turns out he’s heading to the Pill Pavilion.” he said to himself. His eyes flashed. He was actually in fear of Meng Hao’s Dao of alchemy. However, Fang Yanxu had told him that other than the first generation Patriarch, no one had ever been able to concoct the third medicinal pill.

Therefore, he wasn't too worried.

“According to Fang Yanxu, the little hoodlum isn't qualified to concoct the second medicinal pill. Of course, it would all depend on his enlightenment regarding certain fundamentals, an enlightenment that no one in the Immortal Realm could possibly achieve. Only those on the threshold of the Dao Realm could achieve it!

“Considering that, it seems that he simply has no way of concocting the second medicinal pill.” Fang Shoudao coughed dryly. In truth, the matter of the marriage between Meng Hao and Li Ling'er had really gotten him worried lately.

“Well, there's nothing to be done. I'm his grandfather's grandfather, and I love him more than anyone else in the clan. If I don't worry about his future, then who will, right?” Fang Shoudao sighed to himself, then blinked an eye to send some more divine sense out toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao flew through the Dao of Alchemy Division, causing rumbling sounds to echo out. After a month being away, it was his grand return. As various clan members caught sight of him, they began to speculate about what exactly he was doing. Then, people began to realize that he was heading toward the Pill Pavilion, and excitement began to build.

“Could it be that after charging through all of the Medicine Pavilion, the Crown Prince is now going to challenge the Pill Pavilion?”

“The Crown Prince was already able to concoct one of the three great medicinal pills, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. Could it be... that he's going to try to concoct the other two pills?!”

Even as they made their speculations, they flew into the air to follow Meng Hao. It didn't take long before the entire Dao of Alchemy Division was astir. As for Meng Hao, he shot through the air at top speed, making no attempt to conceal his actions as he whistled toward the Pill Pavilion.

Soon, he was standing directly outside of it, surrounded by clusters of curious clan members.

What they saw was Meng Hao unhesitatingly approach the second

drum, raise his fist, and strike the drum's surface.

A sonorous boom resonated out, causing everything to shake. The entire Dao of Alchemy Division trembled, and even the ancestral mansion reverberated with the sound.

“The Crown Prince really is going to try to concoct one of those legendary medicinal pills!!”

“He already concocted the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, now he's going to try to make a Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill!!”

The sound of the drum echoed out in all directions, causing even more clan members to approach. This was not like the Medicine Pavilion, where people couldn't see inside. Anyone could bear witness to the concocting of the legendary medicinal pills.

Meng Hao stood outside the Pill Pavilion, hand still clenched into a fist. It was at this point that the list of rewards for concocting the medicinal pill appeared in front of him.

“Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill! Whoever concocts this pill will receive a reward of 1,000,000,000 spirit stones, 1,000,000 Immortal jades, 20,000,000 merit points, 100,000 medicinal plants of your choice from the Dao of Alchemy Division, six clan Daoist magics, and one Ancient treasure. The Dao Bell will toll 18 times! The ingredient fee is 10,000,000 merit points for one set.”

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao's clan merit points were reduced by 10,000,000!

A jade slip then appeared in front of him. At the same time, a vast collection of medicinal plants appeared, which floated around him in the air. In total, there were 99 different plants.

Meng Hao raised his hand to take the jade slip. After scanning it with divine sense, he could see the method for how to concoct one of the Fang Clan's three great medicinal pills, the second pill... Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill!

After glancing at the formula, Meng Hao's eyes narrowed, and he

understood why it was so difficult to concoct the pill, and why nobody from the Dao of Alchemy Division had successfully done so over the years.

“The difficulty in concocting this pill comes from the grafts that are involved. There is no grafting technique, only a rough pill formula. Furthermore, the pill formula doesn’t even list the names of the plants and vegetation involved. All it does is list the degree to which certain characteristics are required of the plants.

“You need to use these 99 medicinal plants to graft 100,000 different plants that all harmonize with each other. That is the first step, Sea Cleaving.

“As for the Heaven Defying part of the pill, it seems so profound. How do you concoct that portion?” After a moment of silence, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with a bright glow, and he thought back to what the middle-aged man had said on the ninth level of the Medicine Pavilion.

“The Essence is the Dao, the basis of everything that defies Heaven!

“I understand now. This medicinal pill is difficult to concoct because... it requires Essence! That’s why Pill Elder couldn’t concoct it, and yet... Fang Yanxu from the Medicine Immortal Sect could!” Meng Hao felt as if his mind were being struck by lightning. Then, everything became clear.

“Essence.... well, I have that too!” It was at this point that his terrifying Divine Flame Immortal meridian roared to life inside of him. His cultivation base surged, and massive pressure rolled out. The surrounding clan members were shocked to discover that Essence ripples were pouring out of Meng Hao!

They might be weak, and as vastly separated from the power of the Dao Realm as Earth is from Heaven. However, it was definitely Essence power!

It wasn’t enough power for Meng Hao to reach the Dao Realm, but if all he was doing was concocting pills....

“It’s enough!” A smile broke out on Meng Hao’s face as he waved his right hand, causing all 99 medicinal plants to fly toward him. Then, they blurred as he began to graft them together at high speed.

Note: Er Gen included a note at the end of this chapter commenting on how it was longer than usual. His chapters are usually 3,000 Chinese characters, which usually works out to around 2,000-2,200 English words. This chapter was 3,500 characters, and around 2,600 words.

Chapter 1014: Sea Cleaving Heaven

Defying Pill

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao's Divine Flame Immortal meridian exploded with power, Fang Yanxu sat in the Medicine Immortal Sect, and his face suddenly flickered. He rose to his feet, vanished, and reappeared next to Fang Shoudao in the ancestral mansion.

"That little punk actually does understand the threshold of the Dao Realm!" he said. "He's figured it out too early! Without sufficient wisdom, it's not a good thing."

When Fang Shoudao heard this, he stared in shock.

"You mean...?"

Fang Yanxu looked over at Fang Shoudao and then coolly said, "I mean that he CAN concoct the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill after all."

Fang Shoudao's expression flickered, and then he frowned.

"Why do you have to make things so hard on him?" said Fang Yanxu, shaking his head. "Loving memories are what makes our journey along the path of cultivation beautiful."

"The Li Clan was an auxiliary branch of Lord Li's clan," replied Fang Shoudao, "and the reason why the Ji Clan has no choice but to leave them be is that, just like the Wang Clan, the Li Clan did not originate in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"The benefit to the clan as a whole is secondary when it comes to forming a marriage alliance with the Li Clan. The most important thing about it is for Hao'er himself. Once he steps into the Dao Realm, being in that marriage would provide him with unexpected benefits.

"He is now the only hope of my bloodline. How could I possibly allow him to fool around willy-nilly?" Fang Shoudao sighed and then made a grasping motion, causing a jade slip to appear in his hand.

"If Hao'er gets angry, then I'll just have to bear the brunt of that anger,"

he concluded. Eyes filled with determination, he sent some divine will into the jade slip.

Back in the Dao of Alchemy Division, everyone watched as Meng Hao stood in front of the Pill Pavilion's second drum, hair and robes whipping about. He swished his sleeve, and the medicinal plants flying about him blurred as he rapidly grafted them.

He was to use 99 medicinal plants to graft 100,000 variations. That was the first step to concocting the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill.

An expression of concentration could be seen on his face, and his eyes flickered with the glow of augury. More and more medicinal plants appeared around him.

3,000. 7,000. 10,000!

That wasn't the end. Meng Hao lifted his hand and waved a finger, causing all of the medicinal plants to split apart as he started new grafts. In accordance with the pill formula's requirements, he continued to create more and more medicinal plants that all harmonized with each other.

Doing something like this required incredible skill with plants and vegetation, skill that could only be described as terrifying. It was something that, in the entire Dao of Alchemy Division, only Pill Elder could also do.

No one else in the Dao of Alchemy Division could come close, the reason being that such a level of skill with plants and vegetation required that someone pass the eighth level of the Medicine Pavilion by un-grafting at least 500,000 medicinal plants.

Even in the Medicine Immortal Sect, only Fang Yanxu was qualified to do such a thing.

Time passed. Meng Hao's hand was in constant motion as more and more grafted medicinal plants appeared around him.

20,000. 30,000. 40,000....

It was a dazzling sight, and all of the surrounding members of the Fang

Clan were shaken inwardly. They had never seen someone concoct pills in such a way. To them, this was not a matter of simply concocting pills. This was a Dao!

The Dao of alchemy!

The alchemists were all moved, and Pill Elder stood on his mountain peak, watching intently.

50,000. 60,000. 70,000....

Meng Hao's hands moved faster and faster, and the flash of augury sparkled in his eyes. All of his attention was focused on deconstructing, then grafting medicinal plants. Boundless light rose up, and only continued to grow brighter and brighter.

An intense aroma of medicinal plants and vegetation wafted about. It grew stronger and stronger until it filled the entire Dao of Alchemy Division. All of the cultivators who caught a whiff felt enlivened.

Time passed by slowly. Soon, a day had gone by, and Meng Hao was still deconstructing medicinal plants. During the process, he couldn't make a single mistake. If he did, if he missed out on a single characteristic of a single plant, it would influence the deconstruction of all the other plants and vegetation.

80,000. 90,000.... On the second day, Meng Hao's hands suddenly stopped moving. Shockingly he was now surrounded by... 100,000 medicinal plants!

From 99 plants, he had deconstructed and grafted 100,000 new, unique medicinal plants!

The surrounding members of the Fang Clan, including the alchemists from the Dao of Alchemy Division, were in shock. What they had seen was like something out of a legend. It was like observing a Dao, a type of pill concocting in which refuse was turned into a divine item!

However, nobody spoke. They only looked on, panting. Interrupting someone who was concocting pills was the highest taboo, and considering that Meng Hao was now immersed in the Dao of alchemy, the members of

the Fang Clan maintained complete silence. They didn't want to disturb him. However, their eyes were filled with excitement and approval that bordered on madness.

Meng Hao closed his eyes, then opened them a few moments later. A brilliant gleam could be seen as he extended his hands and pinched down with his fingers.

"Sea!" he barked.

As soon as the word left his mouth, the 100,000 medicinal plants which surrounded him all collapsed into pieces. All of the leaves and branches shattered into dust as if being squeezed dry and dying.

The sight of it caused everyone to gasp. However, the cultivators with strong skill in the Dao of alchemy were instantly astonished.

A wind picked up, gathering up the dust that was the remnants of the 100,000 medicinal plants, leaving behind... something formed from the sap of 100,000 plants... an emerald sea!

The green sea surrounded Meng Hao, and pulsed as if with waves, sending tremors out in all directions. It almost looked like real seawater, and although it wasn't a boundless expanse, it was truly a sea!

The sea of plants and vegetation rotated ceaselessly around Meng Hao as he extended both hands and then violently shoved them downward.

"Congeal!"

Rumbling filled the air as the sea of plants and vegetation began to boil, then condense inward. In the blink of an eye it transformed into an enormous ball of sap in front of Meng Hao.

Almost in that same moment, Meng Hao's Immortal meridians exploded with power. 33 Heavens appeared, and the secret magic of the Immortal Realm Paragon was unleashed. Instantly, all of his Immortal meridians transformed into Divine Flame Immortal meridians!

123 Divine Flame Immortal meridians surged with power, causing 123 beams of glowing Divine Flame light to shoot toward the sphere of sap.

They merged into each other, and Essence power emanated off of Meng Hao. His entire body trembled, and beads of sweat broke out on his face. His eyes gleamed with determination as he reached out and manipulated the sphere of sap with both hands.

It began to boil madly. Bulges and depressions rose and fell on its surface, and numerous magical symbols flickered. It was almost as if there were some Earth-shaking Heaven-shattering power inside of it.

It seemed like it might explode at any moment, but Meng Hao was constantly suppressing it.

Rumbling sounds echoed out from inside of the sphere of sap, which was now the complete focus of all attention.

The sphere grew smaller and smaller as Meng Hao suppressed it, until finally it was the size of a fist....

Unable to push the sap down any further, Meng Hao cried out, "Sea Cleaving!"

An incredible force burst out from within the sphere, causing his hands to recoil. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and he backed up. At the same time, the fist-sized sphere of sap directly exploded.

A huge boom echoed out in all directions as endless amounts of sap splashed out in all directions. It was as if the entire sky... was suddenly stained the green color of plants and vegetation!

"Did he fail?" That was the question floating in the minds of all the onlookers.

"Heaven Defying!" Meng Hao threw his head back and roared, unleashing the full explosive power of his Divine Flame Immortal meridian.

The splatters of sap suddenly stopped in place, then began to move in reverse. In the blink of an eye, all of the sap had returned and reformed in front of Meng Hao!

This sight caused the minds of all onlookers to reel. They had clearly

seen the sky stained green when the sap exploded. But now, there was a defiant reversal! The Heavens changed color again as the sap completely went in reverse.

Shockingly, the sap congealed together, becoming a green medicinal pill which floated in front of Meng Hao!

The powerful, intense medicinal aroma exploded out, filling the entire Dao of Alchemy Division, reaching the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, and spreading out across roughly half of Planet East Victory.

Planet East Victory was completely shaken!

If that were all there were to it, it wouldn't be enough to see how valuable the pill was. However, in the exact moment that the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill appeared, all of a sudden, shocking winds swept out through the sky above Planet East Victory as countless Tribulation Clouds appeared.

This was not true Immortal Tribulation, but rather... Pill Tribulation!

From ancient times until now, whenever shocking pills appeared, it would stimulate the power of Heaven and Earth and cause Pill Tribulation to appear, to attempt to eradicate the pill!

The scene caused shock to rise up in the hearts of the members of the Fang Clan. Fang Danyun's eyes glowed brightly, and Fang Yanxu was clearly moved.

The Pill Tribulation formed in the blink of an eye, creating boundless Tribulation Clouds that caused all of Planet East Victory to tremble. The cultivators were shaken as they watched a lightning bolt descend from the roiling clouds.

"Trifling Pill Tribulation!" said Meng Hao, his expression indifferent. He had transcended Immortal Tribulation, so to him, Pill Tribulation wasn't even worth glancing at. Even as the lightning bolt descended, Meng Hao extended his hand. All 123 Immortal meridians then transformed into the Blood Demon Grand Magic.

123 Blood Demon heads charged up. The entire sky turned bright red as

the Blood Demon heads fused together, becoming a gigantic 3,000-meter head with a horn sticking out of its forehead. The massive head surged toward the lightning bolt.

A huge boom echoed out. Everyone was astonished to see the lightning bolt collapse into pieces, completely incapable of doing anything to the Blood Demon head. After that, the head continued onward, whistling through the air toward the Tribulation Clouds!

The Tribulation Clouds... were destroyed!

When that happened, the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill in front of Meng Hao burst out with brilliant light that shot up into the sky. Simultaneously, the Dao bell appeared in midair above the ancestral mansion and began to toll, shaking everything.

It was not one toll or two, but rather two sets of nine tolls each!

In total, 18 tolls rang out into the minds of the members of the Fang Clan, leaving them completely shaken!

For years and years, the Dao bell had never tolled so many times. The result was that everyone in the whole Fang Clan was left completely flabbergasted.

Meng Hao stood outside the Pill Pavilion, his hair whipping about, his eyes shining brightly. The surrounding cultivators and alchemists of the Fang Clan had looks of unprecedentedly wild reverence on their faces as they clasped hands and bowed deeply.

When they straightened up, they found that Meng Hao had not left the Pill Pavilion. Instead, he had walked forward... toward the third drum!

Chapter 1015: Heavenly One Thought!

The members of the Fang Clan had suppressed their comments for too long, and now everything erupted.

“The Crown Prince, he... he’s going to concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill?”

“The Crown Prince already concocted the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill and the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill. B-but... the Heavenly One Thought Pill is the number one pill of the Fang Clan! Nobody can concoct it!”

The entire Dao of Alchemy Division was boiling.

Fang Yanxu’s eyes glowed brightly with anticipation as he looked at Meng Hao. Although he didn’t believe that Meng Hao would actually succeed, he wanted to see for himself whether a miracle would occur.

As for the methods Fang Shoudao was using to make things hard for Meng Hao, Fang Yanxu didn’t approve. When it came to making choices between love and opportunity, some people would pick the former, others the latter, and he didn’t feel it was right to interfere with such a decision.

Forcing your own choices onto others was fundamentally wrong. However, he wasn’t in a position to say anything about it. After all, Meng Hao was of the same bloodline as Fang Shoudao, and he was not.

Fang Shoudao was frowning. He was certain that Meng Hao would be incapable of concocting the Heavenly One Thought Pill. Furthermore, even if some Heaven-defying event occurred, he had already reduced the prizes so that Meng Hao couldn’t make enough to win the bet.

And yet, for some reason, he had the feeling that he had overlooked something. Unfortunately, no matter how he reviewed all the details, he couldn’t pick up any clues about what it might be.

“The little hoodlum is far too crafty,” thought Fang Shoudao, smiling slightly. “I have to be on guard.... Although, regardless of whether he succeeds or not, he still has to pay 100,000,000 merit points.”

Back in the mountains of the Dao of Alchemy Division, atop the Pill

Pavilion, Meng Hao actually wasn't even thinking about the reward for concocting the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill. He was sure that Fang Shoudao would have come up with a reason to reduce the reward to ensure that he wouldn't be able to come up with all the spirit stones he needed within the time limit.

Since that was the case, Meng Hao decided that he might as well make a big show of things. By striking the third drum, it indicated that he would be attempting to do something that nobody in the Fang Clan other than the first generation Patriarch had ever done! He would concoct the pill nobody had ever concocted... the Heavenly One Thought Pill!

Neither Fang Danyun nor Fang Yanxu, nor anyone throughout all the years, had ever successfully concocted the clan's legendary Heavenly One Thought Pill!

When Meng Hao came to a stop in front of the third drum and turned his head to look around, he saw the members of the Fang Clan tightly packed in all directions, staring at him. Their eyes gleamed with passionate fervor.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Expression somber, he clasped hands and then bowed to all of his fellow clan members.

"Ladies and gentlemen, fellow clan members. I wish to concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill!

"Unfortunately... this pill requires 100,000,000 merit points. Right now, I don't have enough merit points. Therefore, I would like to request that all of you give me some of your merit points, so that I can concoct the pill...

"The pill that no one other than the first generation Patriarch has ever been able to concoct... the Heavenly One Thought Pill!"

Meng Hao's voice echoed out in all directions. If he had said something like this before concocting the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill, very few clan members would have been willing to give him clan merit points.

But now, after having just recently charged through the Medicine

Pavilion, and then concocting the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill, he had long since built his momentum up to a peak. That was especially true after putting his Dao of alchemy on display by concocting the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill. To everyone who was watching, he was like something out of a legend.

Therefore, when he spoke his words, none of the surrounding clan members refused. In fact, they were all very excited to deliver their merit points to him.

They wanted to witness... something that had never happened in the history of the clan. They wanted to see whether or not Meng Hao would actually be able to concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill.

“Crown Prince, there’s no need to be so polite! I’m more than happy to give you a few trifling merit points!”

“I don’t have much, Crown Prince, only one thousand. But you can have all of them to concoct that pill!” Voices rang out in all directions. Varying amounts of merit points were transferred to Meng Hao’s jade slip, causing the balance to rise rapidly.

It didn’t take long for there to be more than 10,000,000. Only when the number reached 30,000,000 did it begin to slow down. Yet, there was still far too big a gap before he got as many as he needed.

It was at this point that virtually all of the alchemists from the Dao of Alchemy Division stepped forward and began to give merit points to Meng Hao.

“We’re all alchemists, and our greatest aspiration in life, other than creating our own unique and unmatched medicinal pill, is to be able to see our clan’s legendary Heavenly One Thought Pill!”

“We know that in our entire lifetime we will never be able to concoct this pill ourselves. Crown Prince, since you have a chance to succeed, then how could we hold back?!”

“Crown Prince, I beg of you, you must succeed!!” As the voices echoed out, rising and falling, Meng Hao’s merit point balance exploded up. From

30,000,000, it almost instantly rose up to more than 80,000,000.

Meng Hao's heart filled with warmth, and he clasped hands and bowed to everyone. However, his merit point balance... still wasn't high enough.

All of a sudden, laughter rang out from the center-most mountain deep in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Then, Pill Elder Fang Danyun's voice could be heard.

"Hao'er, allow me to give you 20,000,000 merit points!" Fang Danyun waved his sleeve, and Meng Hao's merit points exploded up, rapidly reaching a total of 100,000,000!

In that same moment, Fang Yanxu lowered his hand. He had also been planning to give Meng Hao some merit points. After all... they were all alchemists, and they all longed to see the Heavenly One Thought Pill. It was a desire that non-alchemists probably couldn't imagine or comprehend.

Fang Shoudao could only smile bitterly. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would be able to overcome the first major obstacle to concocting the Heavenly One Thought Pill so easily. After all, although their original agreement had precluded Meng Hao from borrowing spirit stones, it had said nothing about merit points.

Meng Hao stood there outside the Pill Pavilion in the Dao of Alchemy Division. He took a deep breath as he clasped hands and bowed deeply toward Fang Danyun's mountain peak. Then he turned, raised his hand, and struck the third drum.

BOOM!

The sound rang out throughout the entire clan. Meng Hao's 100,000,000 merit points vanished, and in front of him appeared the information about the Heavenly One Thought Pill.

"Heavenly One Thought Pill! Whoever concocts this pill will be the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division! The prerequisite to attempt this pill is to concoct the previous two pills. The ingredient fee is 100,000,000 merit points per set."

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a strange light when saw the words Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division!

That was the true reason why he was doing this. He wasn't interested in the position itself. Rather, he was interested in the bit of good fortune he would receive after becoming the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division!

That good fortune was something that most people didn't even know about. After all... from the time the first generation Patriarch passed away into meditation until now, there had never been a Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division. The good fortune he would acquire in that moment was something that had long since been omitted from what was taught in the clan about their history.

However, after researching the ancient records, Meng Hao had found the solution to his problem.

In addition to that, one of the reasons he was so confident that he could concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill was because of information he had uncovered in the ancient records. There, it contained various journal entries made by certain clan members who had attempted to concoct the pill. From that information, he had gotten some clues.

Those clues had spun round and round inside of Meng Hao's mind. During the month he had spent doing his research, they had eventually formed together into a very important idea.

"Heavenly One Thought Pill...." he murmured. "Perhaps I am the only person in the entire Fang Clan who can actually concoct it." It was at that point that the twinkle of the starstone could be seen in his left eye.

"Time to carry out the plan." In the moment that his fist struck the surface of the third drum, a huge collection of medicinal plants appeared.

There was also a pill formula, which Meng Hao grabbed and then began to study. Now, he was even more certain.

"The Heavenly One Thought Pill requires divine sense that can stretch out into the starry sky. One must pluck down a shooting star, a stellar object, then use its power to catalyze the medicinal plants, refine them for

at least a few thousand years. Only then can the pill be concocted!

“That medicinal pill... is not meant to be consumed. Rather... it is an item used in cultivating the One Thought Stellar Transformation!

“The Heavenly One Thought Pill.... Actually, the starstone in my left eye... is a Heavenly One Thought Pill!

“In truth, I cannot concoct the pill, not unless my cultivation base is at the same level as the first generation Patriarch, or perhaps if I had the assistance of someone in that Realm.

“However... I already have a Heavenly One Thought Pill. Therefore, there isn’t a need to actually concoct it. I can just put on a little show! That should do!” His expression was the same as ever as he waved his right hand. Instantly, the medicinal plants all trembled as he began to graft them together.

There were over 10,000 of them, and as they were grafted together, the aura of plants and vegetation rose up into the sky. Time passed, and more and more types of plants and vegetations appeared around Meng Hao. In the end, there were 1,000,000 medicinal plants swirling around him. They were packed tightly together, filling the sky, with Meng Hao at the center, completely surrounded.

These were valuable medicinal plants, and Meng Hao would naturally not just waste them. Although he didn’t intend to actually concoct a new Heavenly One Thought Pill, he did plan to further refine the one that was already in his left eye, to ensure that it was truly branded as his own.

Days passed. There seemed to be an endless amount of medicinal plants swirling around Meng Hao. Rumbling sounds filled the air as the plants then shattered, creating a sea of plants and vegetation. It shot toward Meng Hao, encircling him, wrapping him inside and preventing anyone in the outside world from seeing what was happening. It was at that point that the starstone emerged from Meng Hao’s eye and floated in front of him, radiating scintillating starlight as it absorbed the sap from the medicinal plants.

Then he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the

Divine Flame inside of him to explode out as he began a second refining of the pill!

The Divine Flame caused the sap to boil. He performed another incantation gesture, further refining the sap until it turned into numerous magical symbols. Using the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, he caused the magical symbols to fuse into the starstone. The starstone gradually began to turn black, and then emanate powerful ripples which only continued to grow stronger and stronger.

The ripples rapidly spread out into the Dao of Alchemy Division, shocking all of the alchemists.

They watched as the sap rapidly vanished. Brilliant light filled the air, shining out from the starstone that Meng Hao held in his palm. Colors flashed in the sky, as if the Heavens themselves were changing. Countless motes of starlight appeared up above, which were apparently reflections caused by the starstone.

“This is the Heavenly One Thought Pill!” shouted Meng Hao. His voice echoed out in all directions, causing widespread shock. Everyone was staring at the starstone.

“That’s... the Heavenly One Thought Pill?”

Ordinary cultivators wouldn’t be able to tell that Meng Hao was putting on a show and pulling the wool over everyone’s eyes, but Fang Yanxu and Fang Shoudao, as well as Fang Danyun, could all tell just by looking.

“Ah, so the Heavenly One Thought Pill cannot be concocted by someone who hasn’t cultivated the One Thought Stellar Transformation!” A tremor ran through Fang Yanxu as he suddenly understood everything.

“So that’s how it is....” murmured Fang Danyun absentmindedly.

Fang Shoudao stared with wide eyes. “The little hoodlum cheated! He’s cheating!!”

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, however, the Dao bell suddenly appeared in midair over the ancestral mansion. It’s booming toll rang out in three sets of nine. That was... a total of 27 tolls!

Fang Shoudao didn't approve, but... the Fang Clan's Dao bell did! According to it, Meng Hao had concocted the pill!

In the moment that the Dao bell began to toll, a strange light began to glimmer in Meng Hao's eyes. He knew... that it was time for the final step of his plan!

It wouldn't be long before he could leave Planet East Victory!

Chapter 1016: Old Turtle Reliance!

The Dao bell began to toll 27 times, echoing out in the hearts and minds of all members of the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. The fact that the bell tolled so many times caused everyone's hearts to fill with towering waves of shock.

Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill!

Heavenly One Thought Pill!

For countless years, no one had ever been able to concoct all three of the Fang Clan's legendary medicinal pills. However, on this day... Meng Hao did it in front of everyone, giving birth to what would eventually become a myth!

He also became... the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy! 1

As the majestic sound of the toll rippled out into the Ninth Mountain and Sea, an archaic voice spoke from the bell, and its words could be heard in the hearts of everyone in the Fang Clan.

"All members of the Fang Clan must bow to the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!"

That voice was the will of the Dao bell, the highest form of testimony, which bore witness to the rise of the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy !

All of the alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division emerged into the open. All of the apprentice alchemists neared. Even Fang Danyun stepped off of his mountain peak, his expression extremely solemn.

No matter what tier alchemist, everyone approached from all directions and congregated around the Pill Pavilion. All eyes were fixed upon Meng Hao, who stood there above the Pill Pavilion.

"Greetings... Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!!" It was hard to say who spoke the words first, but soon similar words were echoing out from all directions. Everyone in the Dao of Alchemy Division clasped hands and

bowed to Meng Hao, from apprentice alchemists on up.

“Greetings, Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!!”

“We offer greetings, Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!!”

Fang Danyun clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao. Naturally, he was aware that Meng Hao had resorted to a bit of trickery in the end. However, that was not important considering... that the Dao bell approved!

The Dao bell was a magical instrument left behind by the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan, and was a signature treasure of the Fang Clan. It had not interfered in the previous upheaval and rebellion, due to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the internal strife. Were it not for that, the Dao bell would have intervened long before the first generation Patriarch's clone ever did.

As of this moment, the Dao bell shone with boundless, majestic light, which was full of numerous mysterious magical symbols. The symbols glowed, forming a sea of light that swirled around the entire Fang Clan.

Because of the brilliant light, the calls of those in the Dao of Alchemy Division became even more intense. They echoed out of the Dao of Alchemy Division in all directions, until even those in the ancestral mansion could hear them.

Countless voices joined together and were transformed into a call that was the unified will of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

The Lord of the Dao of Alchemy.... Only clan members who had concocted the Heavenly One Thought Pill could be bestowed with the title of Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!

Throughout all the years, the only person who had ever been called the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy was the first generation Patriarch. That is, until this day... when another emerged. The second Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!

As of this moment, the Fang Clan was abuzz, and the tolling of the Dao bell caused the clan members' blood to boil. Furthermore, it caused many

of them, regardless of whether or not they were members of the Dao of Alchemy Division, to answer the call of their blood and shout out at the top of their lungs.

“Congratulations to the Dao of Alchemy Division on the arrival of the Alchemy Lord!”

“Congratulations to the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!”

A huge clamor filled the entire Fang Clan, and echoed out to fill roughly half of Planet East Victory. There were even members of the Fang Clan in the Medicine Immortal Sect who stood there trembling, their minds reeling. One by one, they clasped hands and bowed in the direction of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

In that moment, Meng Hao’s glory had reached an unparalleled pinnacle!

Even Fang Yanxu and Fang Shoudao took deep breaths, stepped forward, and then shockingly, appeared in midair above the Dao of Alchemy Division. As for Fang Yanxu, he looked seriously toward Meng Hao, then clasped hands and bowed!

Of course, he was not bowing to Meng Hao’s person, but rather, bowing to what Meng Hao’s new status as the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy represented!

Fang Shoudao hesitated for a moment before finally lowering his gaze and bowing to Meng Hao. He had no other choice but to do so. Despite being a Dao Realm Patriarch, despite being the acting Clan Chief, the will of the Dao bell had spoken, and as such, no member of the Fang Clan could possibly resist!

To resist the Dao bell was to disobey the first generation Patriarch!

Fang Yanxu and Fang Shoudao, as well as the three remaining Ancient Realm cultivators who had extinguished more than ten soul lamps, including the Seventh Patriarch, all appeared and bowed.

As of this moment, the entire Fang Clan was bowing to Meng Hao.

The toll of the bell continued to echo out. 18 times. 19 times.... all the way until it had tolled 27 times, shaking all of Planet East Victory.

Then, the brilliant light shining out from the Dao bell descended onto Meng Hao, surrounding him and causing him to float up into the air toward the bell itself.

This development caused everyone to stare in shock.

Next, an ancient voice spoke out from the Dao bell, which echoed out into the minds of all members of the Fang Clan.

“The Lord of the Dao of Alchemy can ring the Dao bell one time, converging the soul, extending divine sense, and allowing the will of the clan to descend onto the body!”

The voice echoed out into the minds of all of the members of the Fang Clan, whose eyes went wide as they stared at Meng Hao within the light.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever, but his heart was pounding with joy.

“So it’s true! The dying words of the first generation Patriarch weren’t a hoax!

“I was able to find clues in the clan’s ancient records, and they turned out to be true!

“The Dao bell is not limited to chiming autonomously, but...it can be rung by others!

“And the only way to do that is to become the Clan Chief or... the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy!” Meng Hao floated through the light toward the Dao bell.

Countless clan members were looking on, and Fang Shoudao’s heart was starting to pound. He had overlooked the matter of the Dao bell, as well as the fact that either the true Clan Chief or the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy could ring it.

After all, for countless years in the Fang Clan, no true Clan Chief had appeared other than the First generation Patriarch!

If this scene hadn't revealed itself now, he would never even have considered that it could happen.

The foreboding sensation continued to grow stronger within Fang Shoudao. All of a sudden, he felt as if things were slipping out of his control. It seemed like something very bad was going to happen, and all of a sudden, he thought about the month that Meng Hao had spent studying the clan's ancient records.

"Just what is the little hoodlum up to?" he thought, frowning.

All clan members watched as Meng Hao floated up toward the Dao bell, getting nearer and nearer until he was directly in front of it.

It was simply enormous. Because it usually appeared up in the air, with nothing nearby to compare it to, it normally didn't give people a sense of its stunning size. But now that Meng Hao was right there in front of it, he looked no larger than one of the magical symbols carved on the bell's surface.

By now, the minds of all the members of the Fang Clan were shaken.

The bad feeling in Fang Shoudao was getting much more intense.

Meng Hao stood in front of the Dao bell, took a deep breath, and then looked down at the lands below. He looked at the ancestral mansion, at the Dao of Alchemy Division, and at Fang Shoudao.

Then, he smirked, lifted his right hand, and waved to Fang Shoudao, almost as if he were saying farewell.

That instantly caused Fang Shoudao's eyes to grow wide, and his mind to spin.

"Not good!" Fang Shoudao was just about to charge forward when Meng Hao's hand formed into a fist and he... struck the Dao bell, causing it to ring.

This time the Dao bell did not ring of its own initiative but, rather, it was struck. As soon as Meng Hao's hand made contact with it, a boom echoed out that was completely different than the previous sound of its tolling. It

was sonorous, ancient, filled with endless time. It sounded almost like a sigh, which instantly echoed out in all directions.

All of the members of the Fang Clan, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, as long as the blood of the Fang Clan pumped in their veins, heard a reverberation that caused their minds to go blank.

It didn't matter that Fang Shoudao had a Dao Realm cultivation base. In that moment, his expression turned vacant as the boundless sound of the tolling Dao bell filled his mind. Simultaneously, brilliant light suddenly surrounded the bodies of all members of the Fang Clan.

Meng Hao's mind was also trembling, and it felt as if all of his divine sense was being sucked into the Dao bell. Then, as the bell rang, it was dispersed outward in all directions.

It wasn't just the members of the Fang Clan who were affected. All the lands, the entire world, all of Planet East Victory, was affected. Mortals, plants, animals, all living things heard the toll of the bell, and suddenly, their minds went blank.

Meng Hao's divine sense flowed out with the tolling of the bell; in the blink of an eye it filled all of Planet East Victory. All of the lands in the whole world suddenly appeared in Meng Hao's mind, as clear as crystal.

He saw every area of Planet East Victory, every living thing. Considering the level of his cultivation base, it wasn't something he could normally do. However, with the Divine Soul Nourishment of the power of the Dao bell and its tolling, his divine sense was now able to spread out virtually without limit.

As of this moment, he was the only clear-headed person on the entire planet. All other life forms went blank, even Fang Shoudao, who was now incapable of tracking or holding Meng Hao in place. Furthermore, if Meng Hao could come up with some way of teleporting far enough away, then Fang Shoudao would be incapable of finding any traces of him.

The bell tolled, echoing out in all directions, wiping out any and all traces of what would happen next!

To Meng Hao, the tolling of the Dao bell was also extremely beneficial. This good fortune caused his divine sense to expand quite a bit, and stabilize to an unheard of degree..

He saw the Medicine Immortal Sect, as well as numerous mortal cities. He saw mountains, oceans, and rivers. He saw all of the cultivators on the planet, as well as all of the plants and vegetation.

However, in the same moment that his divine sense spread out across all of Planet East Victory, as everyone else was dazed into immobility, Meng Hao suddenly gaped in shock. What he just saw... was a stretch of ocean some distance away from the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory, where there was an island floating in the water. That island happened to look just like a turtle.

In the moment that his divine sense looked upon it, the island suddenly trembled, and an enormous head appeared.

“Dammit! DAMMIT! Meng Hao, you bastard. Y-y-you...I came here to find my sweetie, not to wait for you, you little bastard! Yet you actually rang that piece of junk bell to try to catch me!?!?” The turtle started to curse and, despite everyone else being stupefied and unable to move, it flew up in exasperation out of the sea towards the sky, dragging the continent on its back as it went.

The land on its back was none other than the State of Zhao. It carried with it Mount Daqing, memories of which sprang to mind anew. Guyiding Tri-Rain was also in the State of Zhao, looking toward Meng Hao and covering her mouth as she laughed.

“Old turtle Reliance!!” Meng Hao stared in shock. He had never imagined that he would once again encounter Patriarch Reliance on Planet East Victory!

*

1. In past chapters I translated this as “Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division.” Actually “Lord of the Dao of Alchemy” is more accurate to

the Chinese. In my opinion, the meaning of the title has to do with leadership of that part of the Fang Clan, or mastery of the Fang Clan Dao of Alchemy, or both. However, I don't think it's supposed to mean "THE Dao of alchemy" as in, ultimate mastery of that Dao. I will go back later to adjust previous chapters.

Chapter 1017: Pursued All The Way Out of Planet East Victory

“What are you up to? Hey! What the hell do you want!?!?” wailed Patriarch Reliance.

“I hid all the way out here and you actually found me!? Y-y-you....” Patriarch Reliance felt more aggrieved than he ever had in his entire life.

However, he was very quick, and instantly shot up into the sky. In the blink of an eye, he was off the planet and out into the starry sky, fleeing madly. The person he was least willing to lay eyes on in his entire life was none other than Meng Hao.

He thought about how he had hidden in the Milky Way Sea back in the lands of South Heaven. Eventually, he had gritted his teeth and fled Planet South Heaven to hide on Planet East Victory, nearly halfway across the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain. But then... Meng Hao had actually found him! Patriarch Reliance’s heart continued to fill with grief.

“The world is so big! How... how could you possibly have tracked me down?!?!” he roared, transforming into a beam of light.

“The League of Demon Sealers are all bastards! Damned Demon Sealers! I should have lived footloose and fancy free, but now, I’m not even free to hook up with the ladies!

“The Patriarch is brave and fierce, the number one Immortal turtle in the Ninth Mountain! Fudge! There’s no way I’ll let some little bastard make me his mount! Dammit! Impossible!

“Meng Hao you little bastard, one of these days I’m going to hide somewhere that you’ll never find me!” roared Patriarch Reliance, trembling so badly that it shook the State of Zhao.

Inwardly, he couldn’t possibly be more depressed. Naturally, he was aware of Meng Hao becoming Immortal, and had even watched the shocking scene of him opening all his Immortal meridians, which had left him numb with fright.

However, he had also felt a little bit lucky. After all, Planet East Victory was big, so he had assumed Meng Hao would never be able to find him, or that Meng Hao would even think to look for him there. This caused him to feel a bit smug, believing himself to have a profound understanding of what it meant to be hidden as well as a shadow beneath bright lamplight.

He had been extremely pleased with himself, and had even frequently bragged to Guyiding Tri-Rain about the whole thing.

Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that Meng Hao would use the technique of ringing that bell to multiply his divine sense dramatically, sweep it across all of Planet East Victory, and then find him.

As soon as Meng Hao's divine sense locked onto him, he began to moan.

Meng Hao's eyes began to shine brightly as he stared at Patriarch Reliance. Underneath the influence of the Dao bell, all other living creatures were so shocked that they were temporarily knocked senseless. As for why old turtle Reliance was able to flee and wasn't affected at all, he wasn't sure.

However, there the old turtle was, with the State of Zhao on his back like usual. Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with mad joy.

"Stay right where you are, old turtle!" he roared immediately.

The instant Patriarch Reliance heard those words, he trembled and then picked up speed.

Meng Hao used his next words to frighten and upset Patriarch Reliance, "Old turtle Reliance, if you let me catch you this time, then you can forget about ever getting away! I've already figured out a way to use the Demon Sealing Hexes to lock you down!!"

In order to make the threats more realistic, Meng Hao remained calm and pretended as if he didn't care at all whether Patriarch Reliance fled. At the same time, he lifted his left hand, and ripples of a Demon Sealing Hex appeared, along with a tiny rift in the palm of his hand.

"You can't escape," he said, his expression calm and seemingly filled with utter confidence. From the look of things, all he had to do was wave a

finger, and the restrictive hexing seal within Patriarch Reliance would be activated.

His confidence and tranquility caused Patriarch Reliance's eyes to go wide, and his mind to spin. He was bewildered, unable to determine whether or not Meng Hao was putting on an act. However, the intense feeling of the Demon Sealing Hex was like nothing he had ever sensed before, and it caused him to become extremely nervous and alarmed.

"Impossible! How could this be happening!?!?" thought Patriarch Reliance, trembling. Then he recalled the terrifying scene of Meng Hao opening his Immortal meridians to enter the Immortal Realm, and suddenly he realized... that it most certainly wasn't impossible! And yet....

"I won't give in!!" he howled inwardly. "No way! I'll risk everything! I'm GOING to get out of here!"

In the blink of an eye, he was outside of the planet and in the starry sky. Fearful of being pursued by Meng Hao, he gritted his teeth and began to cast a curse.

Rumbling could then be heard as, up ahead of him, glittering light could be seen out in the starry sky. Innumerable motes of light swirled around as they transformed into a gigantic teleportation portal.

In order to form the teleportation portal, Patriarch Reliance even spat out so much blood that it formed a waterfall that surged toward the teleportation portal and stained it bright red.

"You little bastard! See you again... never!" he roared. Then his body flickered as he shot toward the teleportation portal.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered at the sight of the blood-colored portal, and he was inwardly delighted.

By now, the power of the Dao bell was weakening, and the dazed cultivators would be coming to their senses at any moment. At this point, Meng Hao smiled.

"Patriarch Reliance really is my lucky star!" he thought, taking a deep breath. Just when Patriarch Reliance was about to enter the blood-colored

teleportation portal, the starstone in Meng Hao's left eye began to glitter with starlight.

One Thought Stellar Transformation was the first generation Patriarch's most powerful Daoist magic. In addition to allowing one to incarnate as a planet, it also contained a type of teleportation magic. That magic... was known as Stellar Teleportation.

Before reaching Immortal Ascension, Meng Hao hadn't been able to use it. Now that he was the Immortal Realm Paragon, he could just barely manage to force its usage. His plan all along had been to wait until Fang Shoudao was in a daze due to the Dao bell. Then, he would be incapable of keeping Meng Hao locked down, an opportunity Meng Hao could take advantage of to teleport away, and which would also cause Fang Shoudao to be unable to pick up his trail.

Unfortunately, Fang Shoudao was a Dao Realm expert. Meng Hao was confident that his plan could get him off of Planet East Victory, but he wasn't so confident in being able to elude Fang Shoudao long-term.

The rest of the plan had been to flee at top speed once he got out, then head toward the Nine Seas God World in the Ninth Sea to report in as a disciple.

Although his plan had some weak areas, he had no other choice than to give it a shot.

However, after he saw Patriarch Reliance, he went wild with joy. He could sense how incredible Patriarch Reliance was; considering the old turtle could still move under the influence of the Dao bell, he obviously wasn't weak, and clearly had numerous ways of escaping.

Therefore, Meng Hao had used words to provoke him, to threaten him, to frighten him. The pure and charming Patriarch Reliance ended up being so terrified that he didn't hesitate to spit out massive amounts of blood to open a blood-fueled teleportation portal.

At a glance, Meng Hao could tell that the teleportation portal was powerful, and would definitely lead to a distant location, much further than his own Stellar Teleportation could reach.

Almost in the same moment that Patriarch Reliance began to enter the blood-colored teleportation portal, glittering light covered him and began to teleport him away. It was at that point that starlight covered Meng Hao. Then a boom could be heard as he directly exploded.

Unexpectedly, his body transformed into motes of starlight, which then shot away from the Dao bell at incredible speed. When they reappeared, they were in the starry sky, right next to Patriarch Reliance's blood-colored teleportation portal.

The motes rapidly reformed into Meng Hao, whose face was pale and cultivation base trembling. In the moment he appeared, the teleportation portal suddenly bloomed like a huge blood-colored flower, then vanished.

Meanwhile, the effects of the Dao bell were wearing off of everyone. Fang Shoudao was the first to regain his senses, and in the instant he did, he noticed that Meng Hao was not by the Dao bell, causing his face to fall.

"Not good!" he said, flickered forward to reappear in the starry sky. He sent divine sense shooting out in all directions, rapidly covering all of Planet East Victory as he searched for Meng Hao. Then, he caused his divine sense to expand out into the starry sky, and his face grew very grave as he caught sight of the location where the blood-colored teleportation portal had just vanished.

"Little hoodlum!" he said, grinding his teeth. He looked like he didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He chuckled bitterly, and then suddenly realized why Meng Hao had been poring through the ancient records.

A flash of light appeared next to Fang Shoudao, which turned into Fang Yanxu. He also look at the location where the blood-colored teleportation portal had been. After a moment of silent consideration, he couldn't help but laugh and shake his head.

"He actually came up with this whole plan, just to escape the marriage." He smiled. "Nice job, Meng Hao."

"That little hoodlum searched through the ancient records for a whole month," said Fang Shoudao, sounding a bit helpless. "Now that I think about it, he must have found enough tiny clues to piece together some

information about the Dao bell.”

Fang Yanxu sighed in admiration. “To be able to not only find so many clues in the ancient records, but also be able to piece them together and use them to come up with a plan like this shows that Meng Hao is really extremely exceptional.”

“You’re even praising him...?” Fang Shoudao said. “That little hoodlum didn’t concoct any medicinal pill! It was all a feint! His only goal was to become the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division so that he could ring the Dao bell. As soon as we were knocked senseless, there was no way to restrict his movement, and he had a moment of freedom.

“Although I’m not sure how he managed to teleport away, from the remnants of starlight here it’s obvious that One Thought Stellar Transformation must have some teleportation Daoist magic that we’re unaware of.

“It might be somewhat of a headache for us that he escaped, but the most important thing is the agreement with the Li Clan. There’s still one more month left... before the little hoodlum and that Li lass are supposed to get married.” Fang Shoudao smiled bitterly.

“Enough, Elder Brother Shoudao. Who else in the Junior generation of the Ninth Mountain and Sea has the skill to escape from right under our noses like he did?

“Since he’s gone, why not just let the matter be?” Fang Yanxu laughed heartily as he accompanied the flummoxed Fang Shoudao back toward Planet East Victory.

Planet East Victory returned to normal. Few people were aware of what had actually happened with Meng Hao, and those who did, did not spread word.

According to public knowledge, after becoming Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division, Meng Hao had gone into secluded meditation in order to concoct medicinal pills.

However, there were a few people who had guessed that Meng Hao had

long since fled. One of those people was Fang Wei, who currently sat cross-legged in the Medicine Immortal Sect, looking up thoughtfully toward the sky above the ancestral mansion.

“You’re probably gone by now, right...?” he thought. Fang Wei had complicated feelings regarding Meng Hao. However, he would never forget his mission. He was the shield of the Fang Clan, and his job was to protect the clan from within the shadows.

After a long moment, Fang Wei closed his eyes. He had cut away his past. After dying and then being resurrected, he had told himself... that he was no longer a Chosen of the Fang Clan.

Back in the ancestral mansion, the Grand Elder was held responsible for the rebellion, and for his poor handling of many other previous matters. His punishment was to spend a hundred years in secluded meditation. He was not allowed to emerge, and had to remain sitting cross-legged in the stony cavern. He had no idea that Meng Hao had already fled, and yet Meng Hao’s image continued to remain imprinted on his heart. Occasionally, he would think about him, and would sigh.

The terracotta soldier continued to stand silently in the Ancestral Land. In the moment that Meng Hao left, it suddenly lifted its head and stared off into the sky, waiting for something.

It was waiting for Meng Hao to fulfil his promise to one day take it away from this place.

Meng Hao was gone, but ever since he had come to Planet East Victory, he had spawned many legends and founded many myths!

When he arrived, nobody took much note. But when he left, he was the Fang Clan’s... Crown Prince!

Chapter 1018: Handling Old Turtle Reliance!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea. Somewhere in the starry sky.

Far, far away from Planet East Victory was a location very near the Ninth Sea. If you hovered in the starry sky in this spot and looked off into the distance, you would actually be able to see that between the Ninth Sea and the empty sky, was a stretch of shadowy ruins.

By passing through those ruins, you could arrive at the Ninth Sea itself. If you passed around them, however, it would take far, far longer.

Those shadowy ruins were none other than... the mysterious Ruins of Immortality!

It was at this point that a blood-colored glow rose up above the Ruins of Immortality. In the blink of an eye, Patriarch Reliance's enormous form suddenly flew out.

"Hahaha! Meng Hao, you little bastard! Come on! You think you can find me here, huh?!" Patriarch Reliance seemed incredibly happy, even ecstatic, as he flew out.

"It was bad luck for the Patriarch to run into you on Planet East Victory. This time, though, I'm going to hide in the Ruins of Immortality! I simply can't believe that you'll be able to track me down here!

"Hahaha! The Patriarch turns out to be the smartest one in the end. In all the Ninth Mountain and Sea, nobody is as astute and circumspect as me!" Feeling quite pleased with himself, Patriarch Reliance threw his head back and roared, then flew out across the Ruins of Immortality. However, it was at this point that he heard someone speaking behind him.

"Listen up, old turtle," the voice said lazily. "The term 'astute and circumspect' is something you should wait for other people to say about you. You can't use it to describe yourself."

As soon as the voice rang out, a tremor passed through Patriarch

Reliance. His enormous head slowly turned around, and when he looked behind him, his eyes went wide with disbelief and shock. He couldn't help but stare at his tail, where sat Meng Hao, smiling broadly at him.

"You...." Patriarch Reliance gaped in shock. He clearly remembered that in the moment of his escape, Meng Hao should have been left on Planet East Victory. Now it was clear, however... that the damned bastard had somehow teleported here with him.

One couldn't blame Patriarch Reliance for being so extremely nervous that he didn't notice what had happened. Besides, Meng Hao's One Thought Stellar Transformation and its Stellar Teleportation were extremely bizarre. His lucky break of being able to reach the teleportation portal was something Patriarch Reliance had never considered possible.

After emerging, he was too focused on what was ahead of him and was too excited at having once again evaded Meng Hao to notice that at some point, a blood-chilling figure had suddenly appeared on his tail.

"Hey, old turtle, long time no see!" said Meng Hao, waving at Patriarch Reliance, a bashful smile on his face. From the jovial way he chuckled, he looked like someone randomly meeting an old friend in an unexpected location. His appearance was very amiable.

After staring in shock for a moment, Patriarch Reliance threw his head back and roared as if he were going crazy. The entire State of Zhao quaked on his back.

"Meng Hao, this is going too far! I can't deal with this!!

"I've run away from you a bunch of times now, you and your damned League of Demon Sealers. Dammit, Meng Hao, you little bastard! Y-y-you... you just push people too far!!

"I'm gonna eat you!" Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of collapsing emotionally, and his heart was wracked with grief. He was also enraged; there was nobody he wanted to see LESS than Meng Hao, and right now, in his moment of complete elation, all of a sudden, Meng Hao appeared on top of him! He was left feeling like he was about to go insane.

The more he thought about it, the worse he felt. In fact, he felt himself to be the most tragic figure in all existence.

Roaring, he opened his mouth and stretched it out toward Meng Hao, hoping to snap him up in one bite.

However, even as his mouth neared Meng Hao, Meng Hao cleared his throat and lifted his right hand up in front of him.

“Come on, Patriarch, come scratch this itch for Young Master.”

A tremor ran through Patriarch Reliance, and his enormous head stopped in place. His eyes were bright red as he stared at Meng Hao, and yet... he didn't dare to really swallow him.

The sealing Hex inside of him was spinning, and therefore, he didn't dare to harm Meng Hao in the slightest. If he did, the Hex would explode out violently.

As soon as Patriarch Reliance's head stopped moving, Meng Hao walked forward and patted his head lightly.

“That's a good turtle,” he said, laughing. “Come come, let me see if those words I carved on your back that year are still there.”

Patriarch Reliance trembled and roared in rage. He felt wronged, provoked even, and couldn't help but cry out, “You little Heaven-damned bastard! SCREW OFF!”

He felt like he was about to explode. He swished his tail with incredible force, flinging Meng Hao out into the starry sky.

At the same time, he spun in place and then attempted to flee as fast as possible.

However, in the moment that he flung Meng Hao away, Meng Hao produced the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced as Meng Hao switched places with a random animal in the State of Zhao.

As soon as he appeared on Patriarch Reliance's back, he cleared his throat, then flickered to appear on Patriarch Reliance's head. He stamped down hard with his foot.

“What do you think you’re doing, Patriarch?! It wasn’t easy to arrange this reunion! What are you running away for!?”

Patriarch Reliance stared in shock, trembling. Eyes bloodshot, he roared; apparently his rage had reached the pinnacle, and yet there was nothing he could do. He could not use any of his divine abilities to harm Meng Hao in the least.

His aura exploded with power, transforming into waves of qi that surged out in all directions, causing Meng Hao to fly off of his head. Mist roiled out to surround Patriarch Reliance, covering his body as he tried to escape again.

Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph, then extended his hand and pointed toward Patriarch Reliance.

“Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!”

In the instant that Meng Hao called out, Patriarch Reliance’s massive frame suddenly stopped in midair. Normally, the Hexing magic of the League of Demon Sealers would not have much of an effect on anyone who had a vastly higher cultivation base than Meng Hao, and it would even produce a backlash.

However, Patriarch Reliance already had Demon Sealing Hexing magic inside of him, and was supposed to be Meng Hao’s Dao Protector. Therefore, he was virtually incapable of fighting back against the Hexing magic.

Meng Hao hadn’t been aware of that years ago when they first met, and afterward, Patriarch Reliance had spent most of his time in hiding. But now that Meng Hao was the Immortal Realm Paragon, his cultivation base was as different from before as Heaven was from the Earth. Now, he was able to sense the restrictive Hexing magic that was already inside of Patriarch Reliance, which allowed his own Hexes to completely control him.

It was due to this that the moment Patriarch Reliance had seen how powerful Meng Hao had become, he had begun to panic.

Meng Hao cleared his throat as he caught up with Patriarch Reliance. As he neared, Patriarch Reliance began to tremble, and then recover from the Eighth Hex.

In that moment, before Patriarch Reliance could begin to roar in rage, Meng Hao waved his hand once again.

“Demon Sealing, Seventh Hex, Karmic Hexing!” Meng Hao said, waving his finger. However, there seemed to be no reaction.

“Eee? There’s no Karma?” he said, shocked. This was the first time he had ever encountered a situation in which there was no Karma. He tried again a few more times, and upon finding that he only continued to fail over and over again, a strange light began to glow in his eyes.

He was truly shocked. Patriarch Reliance, on the other hand, was so scared his blood was running cold. Thinking back to certain bad memories of the past, he bellowed in rage and then spit a beam of light out of his mouth. The light transformed into a flying dagger that slashed viciously toward Meng Hao. It seemed intent on slicing open the starry sky, completely separating Patriarch Reliance and Meng Hao.

The flying dagger looked like a willow leaf, and was seemingly ordinary. However, it emanated an ancient air, and was clearly anything but ordinary.

“Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!” As soon as Meng Hao saw the flying dagger, his eyes widened and he waved a finger. Immediately, Patriarch Reliance was once again immobilized, and his cultivation base was completely locked down.

It wasn’t that Meng Hao’s own Hexing magic was terrifying; instead, it was because of the way it riled the restrictive spell already inside of Patriarch Reliance. That restrictive spell responded to Meng Hao’s will, and exploded out with power.

The flying dagger was now no longer under Patriarch Reliance’s control, and stopped moving. When that happened, Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine. He approached the flying dagger and waved his hand, causing it to fly into his hand.

Then, right in front of Patriarch Reliance, he unleashed A Writ of Karma, binding the flying dagger to him with ties of destiny.

When the Eighth Hex faded away, Patriarch Reliance let out a howl of grief.

“My dagger! That’s been my favorite flying dagger for years!!

“You give it back to me this instant, Meng Hao! That’s my treasured dagger....

“Y-y-you, just kill me, alright?! Stealing my treasures is like ripping off my skin!

“Meng Hao! Y-y-you....” Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of tears. He couldn’t flee, nor could he hurt Meng Hao. Furthermore, every time Meng Hao unleashed Hexing magic, the restrictive spell inside of him activated, causing him to fill with the desire to weep.

Besides all that, to the miserly Patriarch Reliance, having a treasure stolen was worse than anything else.

Meng Hao was like the bane of his existence, the source of the most tragedy in his entire life. In fact, when Patriarch Reliance contemplated how his life had turned out, tears would stream down his face.

While Patriarch Reliance and Meng Hao were having their little reunion, which was tragic for one and joyful for the other, something else was happening on a planet not very far away from their current location. That planet was... the Ninth Mountain and Sea’s Planet North Reed.

That was the planet occupied by the Li Clan, the Song Clan, and the Wang Clan, making it the home base of sorts for three of the Great Clans.

Currently, the entire Li Clan was garishly decorated with lanterns and banners. The whole place was infected with a spirit of joy, and everyone knew that in a month, Li Ling’er was to be married to the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan from Planet East Victory.

Although quite a few clan members were somewhat critical of the matter, the sudden wedding had been arranged by the Li Clan’s Dao

Realm Patriarch and, besides, Li Ling'er's marriage to Meng Hao had been agreed upon long ago. Therefore, there was no one who could change the forming of the alliance between the two great clans.

Of course, nobody in the Li Clan was aware that Meng Hao had fled the marriage. Nor was anyone aware of the actions of one particular young woman who was anxiously fleeing from Planet North Reed, heading far off into the distance.

That young woman was none other than Li Ling'er.

It was impossible to tell how she did it, but no one detected her departure. After flying out into the starry sky, she patted her own chest in relief and sped off into the distance.

"I'd marry a pig before I marry that blasted, Heaven-damned Meng Hao!" she said through gritted teeth. As it turned out, she had made the same decision as Meng Hao, to flee the marriage.

Unbeknownst to Li Ling'er, the Li Clan Dao Realm Patriarch, the middle-aged man, was actually watching her the entire time. His voice cool, he asked, "There were no mistakes in your calculations?"

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, a black-robed man appeared behind him, illusory and somewhat blurry, making it impossible to see his features clearly.

"My clan's augury magic cannot be mistaken."

"The chance to leave the Nine Mountains and Seas, to reunite the Li Clan to the main branch of the clan, is completely tied to Meng Hao."

The Patriarch remained silent for a moment, then turned and paid no more heed to Li Ling'er. His voice cool, he said, "It won't do to force her. If she wants to leave, then leave things up to destiny."

Chapter 1019: The Hunting of Li Ling'er!

“Meng Hao, give me my treasured dagger back!” howled Patriarch Reliance. Before losing the flying dagger, he actually hadn't cared about it very much. But now that it wasn't his anymore, countless memories about it suddenly flooded into his mind.

Every memory that surfaced filled his heart with pain.

Meng Hao pretended not to hear as he lifted his hand and waved his finger a few more times, employing the Seventh Hex. Patriarch Reliance's scalp went numb as Meng Hao then switched to the Sixth Hex.

Glittering light could be seen as numerous magical symbols appeared on Patriarch Reliance's body. Next, another magical symbol appeared on his forehead, a symbol which was different than Meng Hao's own Sixth Hex.

When Meng Hao saw it, he suddenly understood everything.

“Aha! Somebody else already used the Sixth Hex on you!

“Well then, I guess I'll try out the Fifth Hex!” Looking very excited, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand; shockingly, a tiny rift appeared in his palm. When Patriarch Reliance saw it, he was nearly scared out of his mind.

“MENG HAO!!!” he howled miserably.

“What are you planning?” howled Patriarch Reliance. “Just what do you think you're going to do!? You're pushing things TOO FAR!!” His body trembled violently, and he seemed to be on the verge of going mad.

“I swear there's nobody who bullies people worse than you! Unlucky? I've got enough bad luck for eight lifetimes! I was bullied by the League of Demon Sealers back in the day, and now I'm getting bullied by you!

“I ran all the way to Planet East Victory to hide from you, you know!? You think that was easy, huh? You think it was a walk in the park!?!?”

“Hey, what are you doing!? You already stole my treasured dagger! W-what!? What are you doing? Come on, tell me! Do you know how old I

am?! I'm your Patriarch, remember!?"

Meng Hao scratched his head, starting to feel a bit awkward.

"Alright, how about this," he said, clearing his throat. "If you take me to the Nine Seas God World, I'll let you go for the time being. Then you'll have another chance to hide from me." He still happened to have the jade slip given to him during the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire, the one that was supposed to take him to the Nine Seas God World. Unfortunately, Fang Shoudao had somehow found out about that, and had managed to negate the jade slip, making it useless.

Patriarch Reliance suddenly quieted down. After a moment of thought, he bitterly nodded his head. Of course, inwardly, he felt quite pleased, and was even laughing coldly.

"This little bastard is still a bit inexperienced. I'm adept at scheming and have deep foresight, so how could I possibly acquiesce to him!"

Outwardly, he sighed and allowed Meng Hao to stand on him as he headed toward the Ninth Sea. After flying for a short time, however, Meng Hao lifted his right hand and caused a Fifth Hex rift to appear in his palm.

"Patriarch," he asked with an enigmatic smile, "are you trying to take me into the Ruins of Immortality?"

Patriarch Reliance suddenly trembled, and his heart filled with rage. However, when he thought about Meng Hao's restrictive spells, he once again began to bemoan his plight to himself as he immediately changed directions to skirt the Ruins of Immortality.

Based on his current speed, it wouldn't take very long for him to get Meng Hao to the Ninth Sea.

Meng Hao beamed at Patriarch Reliance as he slapped his bag of holding, causing the parrot to fly out. The meat jelly was attached to its foot as usual, and the jingling of a bell could be heard when the two of them appeared.

As soon as the parrot flew out, it looked Patriarch Reliance up and down, then blinked and squawked, "Eee? What a big turtle! So strange! How

come he seems so familiar?

“Hey, it’s you! I remember now! You’re that big ol’ turtle from the Milky Way Sea!!” The parrot was now very excited. It flew out next to Patriarch Reliance’s head and said, “You know, I was always very curious about what you ate to get so big! You’re huge! Come come, tell Lord Fifth, and you’ll get a reward!”

Not wanting to be outdone, the meat jelly bellowed, “Hey, Lord Third has rewards too!”

Meng Hao stood on Patriarch Reliance’s head, completely ignoring the parrot and the meat jelly as they harassed Patriarch Reliance. With the two of them dogging the turtle, Meng Hao wasn’t the least bit worried about any tricks he might attempt to pull.

It was at this point that he turned back to look at the State of Zhao. A look of reminiscence appeared on his face as he took a step forward and then vanished. When he reappeared, he was on a mountain peak somewhere in the State of Zhao.

The mountain looked different than the way he remembered it. It had been moved and been transformed throughout the years, but it was still the same mountain that he remembered... Mount Daqing.

He stood there, recalling the past. He was currently standing in the same location he had been when he first stepped into the cultivation world, when he had met Xu Qing.

“Mount Daqing....” he whispered with a sigh. As he looked down the mountain, he noticed that the river that had been there once was now nowhere to be seen. He turned his head again and saw that Yunjie County had also disappeared; it would never again exist.

The only thing left was this mountain, and the memories of Meng Hao’s that it contained.

After standing there quietly for a long, long time, he stepped out off the mountain. As he floated there, he could see that same cave from long ago, which still existed on the side of the mountain.

After another long moment, he sighed and turned. Instead of leaving the State of Zhao, he went to the North Sea. Despite the vast changes to the lands, which left the entire State of Zhao different than before, this lake was still here, just as it had been.

The water was calm and mirror-like, and when Meng Hao looked at it, he recalled all the events which had occurred in connection with the lake. Eventually, he caught sight of an actual boat out on the water. It was an old vessel, and an old man could be seen at the till, who looked at Meng Hao as he steered the boat toward the shore.

A pot of alcohol was being warmed inside the boat, and a moment later, a beautiful young woman stuck her head out of the cabin and looked over at Meng Hao.

“Do you remember my name?” she asked with a grin.

“Guyiding Tri-Rain,” he replied, smiling. As he stepped forward onto the boat, the old man smiled and bowed at the waist, then continued to steer the boat out across the water. The young woman sat across from Meng Hao, lifted up the pot of alcohol, and poured a cup. 1

“Do you remember what you promised me?” she asked, her eyes glistening as brightly as the waters of the lake.

“I promised that one day, I would help you become a sea,” he said. Smiling, he raised his cup and then drained it.

The young woman smiled radiantly.

“I want to become a huge, calm sea,” she said earnestly. “I don’t want there to be any waves or tides. I want to be peaceful. Peaceful and quiet. A sea like a mirror.”

Meng Hao nodded.

“How many things have you promised to do in your life?” she asked.

“Four,” he replied.

“And how many of those promises have you fulfilled?”

“None so far.”

“In that case, doesn’t that mean I’ll have to wait a lot longer?”

Meng Hao smiled, raised his glass again, and took another drink.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao and Guyding Tri-Rain were reunited, something happened not too far away from where they were in the starry sky. The same ship appeared that all of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea had been unable to detect.

Two people sat on the ship, one older and one younger, who had watched as Meng Hao opened the Door of Immortality, and then his Immortal meridians. The old man was looking out into the starry sky, where he could see Meng Hao and Patriarch Reliance. At that point, his eyes shone with a strange light, as well as interest toward Meng Hao.

Next to him sat the young man, upon whose face could be seen a look of scorn.

“A man and a turtle,” the young man said with a sneer. “How well-suited for each other. And then there’s that parrot. They all match each other.”

“That man is no simple man,” the old man said calmly. “And that turtle is no simple turtle. As for that parrot, well... it’s not just a simple parrot either.” He looked over at the young man, and he seemed somewhat disappointed, but didn’t say anything further.

“What do you mean, not simple?” the young man said loftily. “Alright, so he opened the maximum number of Immortal meridians, and even became the Immortal Realm Paragon. However, there are tons of people like that in our Spiritstar Realm! They might not actually be Immortals, but... Immortals are worth squat!”

“He’s a true Immortal,” the old man said with a frown.

“True Immortal? What a joke! Isn’t this the same Paragon Immortal Realm that, years ago, innumerable almighty beings viewed with such desire? But now look at it! The only things left are nine mountains!

“If I wanted to kill that guy, all I would have to do is wave my hand, and he would be dead!” Killing intent flickered in the young man’s eyes. Apparently, he felt that killing Meng Hao would be as easy as crushing an

ant.

“I might as well target this guy for my training.... I need to kill an Immortal and bring that person’s head back to the Spiritstar Realm.... I imagine they’ll make it into a battle trophy.” The young man licked his lips. 2

Cold light gleamed in the old man’s eyes as he looked over at the young man.

“He’s a true Immortal, not the type from this age, but rather, the type from primordial times. He embodies what Immortals truly are, the type that in ancient times, could descend to our Spiritstar Realm and cause everyone in the world to bow in worship.

“In the past, our Spiritstar Realm was nothing more than one of the 3,000 Realms below the Paragon Immortal Realm. When the Paragon Immortal Realm collapsed due to various reasons, the role that our world played was microscopic!

“You look down on that turtle, and think it’s ordinary. But you know what? When I look at it, it frightens me!

“I can sense some terrifying undulations coming off of that thing.

“And finally, about that man you so look down upon... don’t tell me you can’t detect that there’s something about him connecting him directly to the Nine Mountains and Seas?!?!” As the man spoke, his wording grew sharper and sharper. By the end, he was clearly rebuking the young man.

The young man sat there quietly, his face slowly growing blue with rage. He didn’t dare to backtalk, but when he lowered his head, his eyes were venomously icy.

“Although this place has crumbled down to its present level,” continued the old man, “you cannot rashly provoke the people here! Actually, I never wanted to come face the dangers of this place, but since your father insisted, I brought you here for your Immortal-Killing Baptism....

“I was forced to agree, and here we are. If you want to try to kill that man, I won’t stop you. However, your father will be able to see all the

records of our journey, and cannot blame me... if you seek your own death!" As his cold words rang out, the old man waved his right hand, causing a vortex to appear up ahead. Within the vortex was an image of Li Ling'er, who was currently in the middle of fleeing from her wedding.

"This girl is a bit weaker, and is also an Immortal. Why don't you kill her for your Baptism?" As the old man spoke, the young man looked up at Li Ling'er within the vortex, and his eyes began to shine with a strange light.

"Wow, she's pretty. Master, you wouldn't mind if, before killing her, I indulged in the... services... of an Immortal, would you?"

The old man frowned and looked a bit disgusted, but didn't say anything.

The young man licked his lips, and then stepped toward the vortex.

Li Ling'er sat cross-legged atop a flying shuttle which sped through the stars. She was also heading toward the Ninth Sea, although not to the Nine Seas God World, but rather, to find an island where she could practice cultivation.

She hoped to borrow some of the power of the Ninth Sea to stabilize herself in the Immortal Realm.

She wasn't unfamiliar with the Ninth Sea, considering that she had been there on clan training on several occasions in the past. To her, this would all be a walk in the park. However, all of a sudden, the starry sky up ahead distorted, and a vortex suddenly appeared.

An arrogant young man stepped out of the vortex, and as soon as he looked over at her, an evil and bizarre glow could be seen in his eyes, almost as if he were a hunter looking at prey.

Li Ling'er's eyes instantly flickered with vigilance. She had never seen this young man before, but she could instantly sense that he was dangerous. Furthermore, the way he was looking at her didn't please her one bit.

"Hello, Immortal beauty! Remember my name! I'm Zheng Linfa! You can call me Yi Fazi! 3

“Remember it because, very soon, I’ll provide you with the most unforgettable experience of your whole life! And also... the last!” the young man said with a smile. He stepped toward Li Ling’er.

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1. The North Sea lake and Guyiding Tri-rain were introduced in book 1. Meng Hao was helped by the lake in his advancement through the Qi Condensation level, which happened in chapter 44. It brought him back to life after he was defeated in battle by Ding Xin of the Violet Fate. That battle started in chapter 65. He eventually met Guyiding Tri-rain in chapter 89, and it was what she told him that helped him deal with Patriarch Reliance in chapter 95.
2. A note about the word Realm: The word Realm used here is the one that refers to a “world” or even “dimension.” It’s the same word we’ve seen in the term “Mountain and Sea Realm” that has already appeared in the story. The Chinese word for the Realms of cultivation (Spirit Realm, Immortal Realm, Ancient Realm, Dao Realm) is different. In most situations the difference is clear from the context of the story.
3. Zheng Linfa’s name in Chinese is zhèng lín fǎ. Zheng is a family name. Lin means “forest” and Fa is a character that can mean many things including “law,” “magic,” and “Dharma.” Yi Fazi is a somewhat strange name that appears to be some sort of nickname. yī fǎ zǐ. Yi means “one.” Fa is the same character from his name. Zi means “son” or “child.” It’s a weird name, and I think it’s some sort of name/nickname pattern made up by Er Gen. You might remember a character from earlier in the book named Yi Chenzi (small-headed guy), whose name followed a similar pattern. I think there was even another minor character with a similar name. Despite consulting with several people, searching online, etc., I couldn’t find any information on the name structure, which is what leads me to believe it might be something made up by Er Gen.

Chapter 1020: Brushing Past!

In an area in the starry sky near the Ruins of Immortality, what appeared to be a huge land mass was cruising along. If you looked closely, you would find that it was in fact no land mass, but rather, a gargantuan turtle.

The turtle had a very sullen appearance, and his eyes shone with ferocity. He appeared to be enraged, yet didn't dare to speak up about it. Instead, he just flew along through the stars.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged somewhere on top of the turtle, sipping alcohol. Guyiding Tri-Rain sat next to him, smiling as she kept the pot of alcohol warm.

The sweet fragrance of alcohol spread out in all directions, and Meng Hao felt incredibly at ease. When he thought about how he had successfully fled the marriage, he suddenly felt as if the whole world was full of boundless possibilities. Although he had practiced cultivation for many years, this was his personality. Although it might seem unstable, that was how Meng Hao liked it; he didn't want to settle down in one place. He wanted to do as he pleased. In his view, when it came to the path of cultivation, sitting around doing nothing was completely boring and meaningless.

His Dao was the Dao of freedom and independence, which was the same as his personality. Everything he did in life was in accordance with his personality.

Patriarch Reliance, on the other hand, was currently so irritated that his gums itched. It was compounded by the condescending parrot, who continually squawked in his ear, trying to get him to agree to be a Younger Brother. That made Patriarch Reliance even more furious.

If that were all there were to it, Patriarch Reliance could endure the situation. However, the meat jelly's nonstop jabbering had pushed him to the brink of collapse. The garrulous chattering was almost like a magical curse, and Patriarch Reliance wondered how Meng Hao could possibly stand to have the thing around all the time. It couldn't be easy.

“Dammit! The Patriarch is always so unlucky!” he thought. “I have to get the little bastard to the Ninth Sea as soon as possible. Then, I’ll completely leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea and never come back!”

“I refuse to believe that if I hide somewhere outside of this mountain and sea, that the little bastard will be able to find me!”

Patriarch Reliance felt quite wronged, and was snarling and raging inwardly.

He truly felt that he was being treated unfairly. In his opinion, ever since he ran into the League of Demon Sealers, his life had become as gray as ash.

“One of these days,” he blustered inwardly, “the Patriarch is going to swallow the entire League of Demon Sealers! Fudge! I’ll give those Demon Sealers some good fortune, if you know what I mean!”

Perhaps because of his continuous internal cursing, at some point he lost track of which direction he was traveling in, and started to drift toward the Ruins of Immortality again.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then waved his hand toward Patriarch Reliance’s rear end. At the same time, he glared, and cried out, “Whooooa!”

Although he actually unleashed the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, the words that came out of his mouth were the same commands you would use when riding a horse.

As soon as the Eighth Hex was utilized, Patriarch Reliance ground to an instant halt. The end result was that Meng Hao truly did appear to be riding Patriarch Reliance just like a horse.

Patriarch Reliance’s eyes went wide and he began to tremble. After a few breaths of time, his body returned to normal, and he threw his head back and roared a sullen and bitter roar.

He had lived for a very long time, so how could he not understand the meaning of the word “whoa”?

“Meng Hao you little bastard, I’m Patriarch Reliance, not some horse, not

some beast of burden!!”

Meng Hao cleared his throat. Having been raised as a scholar, he knew the command words for riding horses, but had rarely had a chance to actually use them. Now that he was sitting atop Patriarch Reliance, he naturally recalled all of those words. “Fine, then. Giddyup!”

As soon as he said the word ‘giddyup,’ Patriarch Reliance started moving forward without even thinking about it. Moments later, he almost exploded with rage as he realized that he was subconsciously cooperating with Meng Hao’s horse-riding commands.

“I’m gonna eat you! EAT YOU, you hear!?” Patriarch Reliance raged.

Trembling, he was just about to lift his head up when Meng Hao anxiously said, “Easy, now!”

At the same time, he tossed out a Fifth Demon Sealing Hex rift to the right side of Patriarch Reliance’s head, scaring him into instantly turning. Yet again, he subconsciously cooperated with Meng Hao’s verbal commands.

“Meng Hao!!” Patriarch Reliance threw his head back and roared. The sound echoed out into the starry sky, eventually reaching a location not too far off, where it was heard by Li Ling’er, who was currently fleeing for her life.

Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth, and her beautiful face was as pale as a corpse’s. Her clothing was torn, and her flesh was cut in numerous locations. She almost looked as if she had been forcefully taken advantage of.

On her forehead was a jagged wound, from which blood spurted out and dropped down into the starry sky.

Her hair was in disarray and her aura weak as she pressed onward.

However, her eyes blazed with fury. How could she ever have imagined that after successfully fleeing her clan, she would encounter a terrifying cultivator like this on her path to the Ninth Sea?

The young man who called himself Yi Fazi was a complete stranger. Therefore, she was definitely sure that he was not a Chosen from any of the other sects or clans. And yet... she could sense terrifying undulations coming off of him.

Despite having a peak Immortal Realm cultivation, Li Ling'er had lasted less than half an incense stick's worth of time against Yi Fazi's divine abilities. She had immediately ended up in sore straits. Were it not for some of the life-saving techniques she had up her sleeves, she would already have perished.

"Who is this guy?!?" she thought, biting her lip as a sense of deadly crisis filled her.

"You can't escape," said Zheng Linfa, licking some blood off of his hand. His eyes shone with a mysterious light, and he wore a slight smile. He was in no hurry. After all, his Dao Protector had said that killing this girl would end his trial by fire. Therefore, he wanted to enjoy himself for as long as possible.

Even if things got somewhat out of control in the end, he wouldn't have to deal with the aftermath. His Dao Protector would naturally take care of any difficulties that arose. In fact, as far as he was concerned, his Dao Protector was actually being too cautious about everything.

"It doesn't matter that you're an Immortal," Yi Fazi said, laughing. "You should feel honored to be my prey. You can't even imagine my status where I come from." As he spoke, he clawed his right hand out in front of him. A boom could be heard as more of Li Ling'er's clothing was ripped away. The explosion of power was so intense that if she had been slower to avoid it, she would have been seriously injured.

Despite avoiding the main blast, she still coughed up a mouthful of blood, and her face paled. Her aura was weakened even further, and her flame of life force seemed to be on the verge of being extinguished.

"He's not a cultivator from the Ninth Mountain and Sea!!" she thought, gritting her teeth. She had already sent a distress signal to the clan via jade slip, and was confident that if she could only hold out for a bit longer,

someone would come to rescue her.

“What are you running for?” said Yi Fazi. “I remember you. You’re Li Ling’er, right? You’re not just any Immortal, you’re a true Immortal! I’ve been practicing cultivation for years now, and I’ve never had the chance to taste the blood of an Immortal. It turns out to be quite sweet!” Laughing, he inhaled the fragrance of Li Ling’er’s blood, and his eyes shone brightly.

“Oh, I get it. You’re trying to buy time. You’re waiting for someone to come from your clan and save you. Well, keep on waiting and see if someone comes. See if anyone got the message from your jade slip.” Yi Fazi waved a finger, causing a violent wind to spring up. Just as it seemed about to crush down onto Li Ling’er, a green light sprang up around her, filled with countless vines that blocked the wind.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the vines were shredded. Once again, Li Ling’er coughed up a mouthful of blood. Her vision swam, and through the pain, her eyes began to shine with despair.

Based on how much time had passed, if the clan had received her message, then... someone should have come already. Considering nobody was around, it proved that her opponent had definitely prepared well for this encounter!

“Don’t worry,” laughed Yi Fazi. “I’ll be gentle. Before you die, you’ll serve me well, and then... I’ll gently rip your body apart piece by piece. I’ll use your blood... to consecrate my Daoist magic!

“Achieve the Dao by murdering an Immortal! Seize your Immortal body to become my foundation!” Laughing, he closed in on Li Ling’er.

It was at this point that a powerful roar echoed out through the starry sky, causing ripples to spread about everywhere.

“Meng Hao!!”

The two words that comprised the roar echoed about, causing Li Ling’er’s eyes to shine brilliantly. Instantly, she headed toward the source of the sound, gritting her teeth as she flew at top speed.

She didn’t hold anything back from her cultivation base. She unleashed

secret magics and even burned her Immortal meridians to achieve astonishing, temporary speed. In the blink of an eye, she had shot far off into the distance.

Yi Fazi's face darkened. Inwardly, he was actually quite frightened. Although he didn't care about the words that were being roared, he couldn't ignore the fact that the roar itself contained an aura that was so frightening it made his scalp feel like it was about to explode.

It was at this point that he heard his Dao Protector's voice in his ear.

"I've already deployed cloaking magic. No more fooling around. End the battle and kill the Immortal. As soon as your trial by fire baptism is complete, we will leave this Realm!"

Yi Fazi's eyes glittered. He didn't respond, but did increase his speed dramatically. In the blink of an eye, he transformed into a beam of prismatic light that shot in pursuit of Li Ling'er. Shocking killing intent roiled out from him.

Gradually, a black, three-headed python appeared behind him. It roared, emanating a fiendish will that was completely different from anything in the Nine Mountains and Seas.

That will was like a paramount fiendishness of Heaven and Earth!

A whistling sound echoed out, like that of an arrow piercing through the sky. Yi Fazi sped closer and closer to Li Ling'er. After ten breaths of time passed, the distance between him and Li Ling'er was reduced to only 300 meters.

It was at this point that Li Ling'er caught sight of that land mass soaring through the stars. It was Patriarch Reliance, with Meng Hao sitting on his head drinking alcohol.

"Meng Hao!!" she cried out as soon as she saw him. However, despite her loud cry, Meng Hao appeared to be ignoring her.

"He can't see you," said Yi Fazi, his voice cold. "If he could, then I wouldn't mind killing two Immortals today." He waved his right hand toward Li Ling'er, causing more blood to spray from her mouth. She could

also sense that despite the short distance between herself and Meng Hao, they seemed to be separated by some sort of illusory screen, making it impossible for him to see her.

“Yi Fazi is too well-prepared to be acting alone. He has to be working with someone. Well, since Meng Hao can’t see me, then I’ll just forget about it. Even if he could see, it would only drag him into this situation. How could I cause trouble for him too?”

Despite being filled with bitterness and despair, Li Ling’er’s eyes gleamed with determination. Even as Yi Fazi’s hand strike closed in on her, she chose to detonate her Immortal meridians!

Booms could be heard as Immortal meridians emerged from her body and transformed into Immortal dragons, which then exploded. Blood sprayed from her mouth as her as the incredible power of the detonation caused her... to shoot directly toward the Ruins of Immortality!

“I’ll have a better chance of surviving in the Ruins of Immortality than in the hands of Yi Fazi!” she thought, flying into the ruins at incredible speed.

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Note from Deathblade: The following is a note Er Gen included in the original release. Obviously, his release schedule back then doesn’t affect the release schedule of the translation.

Note from Er Gen: I’d like to request 3 or 4 days off from everyone in the audience. During that time, I’ll probably only be able to post one chapter per day, as I’m taking my daughter to the Beijing Children’s Hospital to see the doctor.

Recently, I’ve been very concerned because of my daughter being sick. I haven’t said anything because I didn’t really feel like talking about it. I hope that you can understand, brothers and sisters. Thank you.

Chapter 1021: Pursued into the Ruins of Immortality!

Meng Hao waved his finger at Patriarch Reliance, causing him to suddenly stop. By this point, the turtle's discontent had reached the point of detonation, and he let out a mighty roar at Meng Hao. As for Meng Hao, he rose to his feet and looked curiously off into the distance toward the Ruins of Immortality.

"Strange. I got a really weird feeling just now," he said. Although he wasn't sure what had caused it, he was sure that moments ago, something like a veil had passed in front of his eyes. It was as if... there was something he should have seen that had been covered up.

"What do you mean strange?" said Patriarch Reliance, sounding a bit arrogant. "A girl went by just now, calling your name. You ignored her, and she ran off into the Ruins of Immortality. Oh, there was some kid chasing her, looked like he was trying to kill her." Patriarch Reliance looked both disdainful and pleased with himself as he spoke.

Meng Hao stared in shock.

"Yeah, that's right!" the parrot said, sounding surprised. "Lord Fifth saw it too. You mean you didn't see it?"

"Lord Third saw it too!" the meat jelly said, sounding very serious. "You really couldn't see it!? Come on, stop faking. Faking is immoral. Faking is wrong!"

"I saw it too...." said Guyiding Tri-Rain, covering a smile with her hand.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked off into the starry sky. He glanced over at the Ruins of Immortality, muttering to himself.

"Oh right," continued Patriarch Reliance. "Meng Hao, you little bastard, listen up. That kid just now said something like... since you didn't want to marry the girl, he was going to help fulfill your husbandly duties for you. You know, kids these days seem really kindhearted, the type who really finds joy in helping others." He laughed loudly, seeming very pleased with

himself.

“Yeah, that’s right! Lord Third also happens to think that kid is really kindhearted! What a good person! There aren’t many sincere people like that in the world. Such character and such morals are really worth imitating!” The meat jelly nodded its head vigorously, clearly ignorant of the reality of the situation....

The parrot rolled its eyes and then cleared its throat.

“Meng Hao, if you don’t go save her right now, she’ll truly become the plaything of that other guy. If Lord Fifth remembers correctly, that furless girl is named Li Ling’er.”

Meng Hao’s face was now extremely unsightly as he stared off into the Ruins of Immortality, and his eyes flickered with killing intent. He wasn’t sure why Li Ling’er wasn’t back in the Li Clan, but it didn’t matter. Regardless of what issues the two of them had, he had no reason to leave her to die when he was in a position to save her.

Furthermore, since her pursuer had mentioned something about fulfilling Meng Hao’s husbandly duties, well, that was something that no true man would be able to accept.

The matter of he and Li Ling’er getting married was a personal matter between the two of them. For someone to say something like that was an outrageous provocation.

Glaring at the parrot and meat jelly, he gave a cold harrumph, then lifted his foot and then stamped it down onto Patriarch Reliance.

“Alright... follow them into the Ruins of Immortality!” he said, his voice cold but his heart filled with vigilance. He knew that whatever technique had been used to obscure his vision had been something completely terrifying. What was even more frightening was the fact that Li Ling’er was being hunted, and yet the Li Clan hadn’t sent anyone to rescue her. However... Meng Hao glanced at Patriarch Reliance and thought about how he had been unaffected when everyone else on Planet East Victory had been knocked senseless. That showed how unbelievably powerful he must be in battle.

Feeling excited, Patriarch Reliance changed directions and headed toward the Ruins of Immortality at top speed. The parrot was also getting excited. It had the feeling that Ruins of Immortality were filled with all sorts of furred and feathered beasts, which made it like the promised land of his dreams.

As for the moronic meat jelly, it was easily convinced of anything in its simple-mindedness.

Rumbling filled the air as Patriarch Reliance exploded with speed. In the blink of an eye, he was already in the Ruins of Immortality, speeding in pursuit of Li Ling'er.

Patriarch Reliance was gargantuan, so as soon as he entered the Ruins of Immortality, everything began to tremble. It was as if the natural laws had been disturbed by his arrival, and were now changing.

Guyiding Tri-Rain trembled, and her expression suddenly turned blank. For some reason, she suddenly felt like something was calling her, summoning her... to a place deep within the Ruins of Immortality.

It was almost as if there were a forgotten portion of her memories that were suddenly unlocked as soon as she entered.

As soon as the small group entered the Ruins of Immortality, the old man sitting in the ship outside of the ruins frowned.

"It seems I underestimated that turtle... as well as that bird. I even underestimated that bell-like thing, and the girl on top of the turtle." Earlier, he had recognized that Patriarch Reliance and the parrot were powerful, but now he had to admit that they were far more terrifying than he had assumed.

"For them to be able to see through my Daoist magic..." he muttered. It was something that completely exceeded what he had planned for. Originally, his surface plan had been to appear as if he was warning Yi Fazi, and yet surreptitiously provoke him into accosting Li Ling'er.

Through the death of Li Ling'er, the Zheng Clan of the Spiritstar Realm would sow a seed with Meng Hao. The old man had very much been

looking forward to seeing what type of flower would bloom as a result.

But now, things were not going according to plan.

Muttering to himself, he looked over at the Ruins of Immortality, and he seemed to be recalling something that filled him with deep fear.

“The Paragon Immortal Realm of yesteryear....” he thought. Memories swirled within him, and he sighed. Finally, he gritted his teeth and headed into the Ruins of Immortality. He had no choice. He could plot against the Zheng Clan, but he definitely could not allow Yi Fazi to die in the Ruins of Immortality.

Meng Hao stood on Patriarch Reliance’s head, looking around as they sped through the Ruins of Immortality. This was his second time coming here, and things in this area looked much different than the entrance opened by the Three Great Daoist Societies.

The Three Great Daoist Societies’ entrance was an area that they had thoroughly explored, and they had taken steps to ensure that it was not dangerous. However, the current area Meng Hao was in was a place few people ever came to.

Up ahead, numerous stone fragments hung in the air. There were also shattered statues visible, and the sky was covered with fissures that seemed capable of slicing up and swallowing anything and everything.

There were even strange, Demonic voices that echoed about in the air, along with an archaic, ancient aura.

Furthermore, these were only the outskirts of the Ruins of Immortality. As they proceeded onward, Patriarch Reliance’s expression grew more serious. However, he still seemed to charge forward with incredible power, blasting through any obstructions as if they were dried sticks.

The strength of his fleshly body had reached a terrifying degree, allowing them to speed rapidly through the outer region of the Ruins of Immortality.

Meng Hao’s expression was grim as he rotated his cultivation base. 123 Immortal meridians exploded with power, none of which seeped out of

him. 33 blurry Heavens descended, and the glitter of starlight appeared in his eyes. As he stood there, energy surging, he truly seemed to exude the will of the Immortal Realm Paragon.

“I don’t want the same thing that happened before to happen again, where you people can see what’s happening and I can’t!” he suddenly announced coldly. He lifted his hand, and a Fifth Hex rift appeared.

Patriarch Reliance muttered something to himself, then suddenly opened his mouth and roared. The roar did not spread out in all directions, but rather, was confined to the rather small area around him.

“OPEN!”

Rumbling could be heard as everything around Meng Hao suddenly changed. He saw floating spatters of blood and other traces that someone was being viciously hunted down!

In a location not too far away, Li Ling’er’s face was pale white, and blood sprayed from her mouth. She was like an oil lamp on the verge of sputtering out, her life force at its limit. She had found no hope in the Ruins of Immortality, only despair, causing her to laugh bitterly.

Yi Fazi and his black, three-headed python were right behind her. Everything trembled as a brutal aura spread out in all directions, causing ripples to surge out and push the nearby debris away.

“Feeling hopeless, are we...?” asked Yi Fazi, laughing. His eyes gleamed with an evil light as he raised his right hand.

With the wave of a finger, he caused a black beam to shoot out. Everywhere it passed, rocks and canyons shattered into pieces!

A boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of Li Ling’er’s mouth as she slammed down into a field of shattered rocks. She looked back, glaring at Yi Fazi without the slightest hint of defeat or compliance in her eyes.

She might be in a hopeless situation, and she might be about to die, but she would perish with her dignity.

“I love this kind of expression!” exclaimed Yi Fazi. “Back home, all the

trophy heads of the Immortals killed by the Patriarchs throughout history have this exact same expression!

“Immortals....” He threw his head back and laughed, and his expression was one of boundless arrogance.

“Immortals must all die, and all Immortal Realms will be destroyed. Who gives a crap about the Paragon Immortal Realm and you crappy Immortals!” Killing intent flickering, Yi Fazi advanced toward Li Ling’er.

He waved his right hand in a claw-like gesture, causing an enormous power to explode out. Li Ling’er was simply incapable of fighting back or struggling. Her eyes, however, shone with determination, as an aura of extermination suddenly surged up inside her.

She had chosen to self-detonate!

“Self-detonation?” said Yi Fazi with a light smile. He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing some type of Daoist magic that caused Li Ling’er to tremble. Suddenly, the destructive aura within her dispersed. She was shocked to find that... she couldn’t self-detonate!

“I learned this secret magic a long time ago to deal with Immortals who try to self-detonate,” Even as he spoke, Yi Fazi appeared in front of Li Ling’er, lifted his right hand up, and clutched her by the neck. Then, he shoved her down onto the ground. His expression vile, he smiled and said, “Alright, be a good girl and allow me to consummate our marriage. After that... I’ll use your blood for my baptism.”

Li Ling’er was trembling, and she bit her lip as she stared back at Yi Fazi. It was at this point that suddenly, she opened her mouth, causing a brilliant light to shoot out.

Yi Fazi was shocked; at the same time, glittering light suddenly rose up around him. The beam of light flashed past his neck. It was a dangerously sharp willow leaf that had come dangerously close to slitting his throat.

“Slut!” he roared. Inwardly, he was shocked. Without the life-saving shield provided by his clan, that willow leaf would most likely have taken

his head off.

Enraged, he was just about to reach in and rip Li Ling'er's tongue out when, all of a sudden, a coldness caused him to look up and off into the distance. What he saw was Patriarch Reliance's massive frame rushing toward him, atop whom stood Meng Hao, staring coldly in his direction.

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Note from Deathblade: Just a reminder that the following note is from Er Gen, NOT ME:

Note from Er Gen: Thank you, everyone, for your concern regarding my daughter. Thank you for your support, brothers and sisters. Thank you. We have an appointment this afternoon at the hospital, and are leaving right now. Again, thank you!

Chapter 1022: Pipe Down!

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes, and fury raged in his heart. There was no major enmity between him and Li Ling'er, just the normal competition that occurred between cultivators.

Regarding the matter of the marriage agreement, that was something that had been decided years ago. Although Meng Hao had fled the marriage, that didn't mean that he was willing to stand idly by while Li Ling'er faced grave danger.

That was especially so in a situation like this, in which her aura was extremely weak. Before, she had been as proud as the Heavens, but now she was gasping her last breaths. Meng Hao's fury burned like endless flames.

Li Ling'er had been filled with despair, and wanted to die. But when she saw Meng Hao, all of a sudden, a faint glow of hope appeared in her eyes. Meng Hao's arrival was something she could never have predicted.

In the instant she saw him, her desire to live was immediately rekindled.

"It's you.... Can you actually see me?" Yi Fazi stared in shock for a moment, and then a wicked smile spread out on his face, as if he couldn't care less about Meng Hao. Suddenly, he lifted his right hand, clenched it into a fist, and punched out toward Li Ling'er's delicate head.

He wanted to kill Li Ling'er right in front of Meng Hao!

However, in that instant, the Lightning Cauldron suddenly appeared in Meng Hao's hand. It danced with electricity, and rumbling filled the void as he instantly switched positions with Li Ling'er.

Not even Yi Fazi had time to react. All of a sudden, Li Ling'er appeared on top of Patriarch Reliance, after which Guyiding Tri-Rain knelt down, put her hand on her forehead, and began to treat her injuries.

As for Meng Hao, as soon as he appeared in the position previously occupied by Li Ling'er, he saw Yi Fazi's fist plummeting toward him. Without a moment's hesitation, he rotated his cultivation base, causing

the explosive power of 123 Immortal meridians to surge. 33 Heavens descended with terrifying power. All of it was focused directly on Yi Fazi.

Rumbling echoed out, and Yi Fazi's face fell. He jerked back, evading Meng Hao's attack, his fist transforming into an sealing incantation as he pointed toward Meng Hao. Instantly, the black, three-headed python behind him roared and then shot toward Meng Hao as if to consume him.

"I'm glad you showed up!" he laughed. "I originally wanted to use you for my Baptism, so guess what: a year from today will be your first memorial service!"

Yi Fazi threw his head back and laughed. His expression was one of rapture as he waved his hand, causing the black, three-headed python to grow rapidly. Rumbling sounds echoed out as it charged toward Meng Hao.

"He's not from the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" Li Ling'er cried weakly, her face ashen. Despite the healing from Guyiding Tri-Rain, Li Ling'er was still quite weak.

As for Patriarch Reliance, he remained off to the side, eyes shifting back and forth. Naturally, he was not assisting; in fact, he was even contemplating the fact that if Meng Hao died, he would finally be free.

He was about to slip away quietly when Meng Hao waved his hand, causing a Fifth Hex rift to appear and slowly circle around Patriarch Reliance's head. Patriarch Reliance was so frightened he started trembling, and didn't dare to move an inch.

As for Meng Hao, his eyes flickered with killing intent. As soon as he heard Li Ling'er's words, he looked at Yi Fazi, and his eyes began to glitter brightly. He performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then pointed out.

Instantly, a Blood Demon head materialized, roaring. It wasn't just a single head, but 123 of them. They attacked... unleashing all of Meng Hao's power.

The 123 Blood Demon heads instantly merged together, turning into an

even larger Blood Demon head which then shot toward the black, three-headed python. The two slammed into each other in midair, causing a huge boom, along with a massive gust of wind that blasted out in all directions. Meng Hao didn't back up, but instead advanced, appearing directly in front of Yi Fazi and then punching out.

That one punch was filled with Meng Hao's internal Immortal power, as well as all of his true Immortal fleshly body's strength. Its force was comparable to a powerful magic and contained incredible destructive power.

Dust flew up in all directions, and the void shattered. Yi Fazi's eyes went wide, and an intense sensation of deadly crisis shook him. He had known that Meng Hao was powerful, but now... he discovered exactly how powerful.

In that moment of crisis, Yi Fazi threw his head back and roared, then performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, light flowed out across his body in the shape of a suit of armor. The armor was golden, and radiated boundless light that made him seem even more like a true Immortal than Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's fist rumbled as it slammed into Yi Fazi in his suit of armor. Instantly, cracks spread out across the armor, and Yi Fazi was sent flying backward. However, in almost the same instant that the cracks spread out across the armor, they repaired themselves. Apparently the power of Meng Hao's one punch... couldn't harm Yi Fazi at all!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered with coldness.

Yi Fazi laughed arrogantly and then said, "Meng Hao, right? A true Immortal, right? Well, SO WHAT?! You can't even break open my True Plate Armor! What makes you think you have anything powerful enough to fight me with?!"

"Immortal? This is a so-called Immortal?"

"Bring out some of that awe-inspiring Immortal stuff they used to have back in the day, and let me see it! Let me see what an Immortal is supposed to be!" As Yi Fazi laughed, Meng Hao stared in shock at what

was being said, completely unable to make heads nor tails of what Yi Fazi was talking about.

“You don’t understand? You don’t COMPREHEND? Oh, I get it. To you people, all of these things are considered a big secret. People like you still don’t qualify to know the truth.” When Yi Fazi saw Meng Hao’s expression, he began to laugh maniacally.

“Pipe down!” Meng Hao said coolly. He suddenly flickered, transforming into a huge golden roc that shot toward Yi Fazi with incredible speed. He was on him in the blink of an eye, razor-sharp talons slashing out.

Yi Fazi laughed coldly and waved his hand to summon a magical technique. Shockingly, a black, nine-headed python materialized around him, which roared and charged toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, a magical symbol appeared in each of Yi Fazi’s eyes, as well as on his forehead. The three magical symbols merged together, transforming into a spell formation that also shot toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling filled the void as Meng Hao slashed apart the black python and beat his wings in the direction of the incoming spell formation. Suddenly, innumerable mountains appeared, which linked together into chains of mountains that resembled numerous gigantic dragons.

Booms rang out as, in a relatively short period of time, dozens of attacks were exchanged. Every time any of Meng Hao’s divine abilities landed on Yi Fazi, however, his brilliant armor would block the attack.

A ruthless gleam appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes as he took a step forward. Immortal dragons roared as they shot toward Yi Fazi.

Booms rang out, and the ground of the Ruins of Immortality quaked. Countless nearby statues and other ruins were shoved backward.

Yi Fazi’s face flickered slightly, and he suddenly fell back. At the same time, though, he called out,

“Heaven, master of mortals. Hell, master of Heaven. Lin, master of hell!”
1 Yi Fazi’s hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, causing strange ripples to spread out across his body. Shockingly, two enormous

black wings sprouted from his back, which emanated a strange glow. They seemed to fuse with the void around him, causing him to look bizarre to the extreme. At the same time, a huge black bow appeared in his hands.

“Three Masters Exterminate Immortals!” As soon as the words left his mouth, countless magical symbols appeared on his glowing armor, which merged together to form an arrow!

The bow was drawn, the arrow flew!

The void vibrated so violently it shattered. The powerful arrow ripped through the starry sky toward Meng Hao.

Seeing the arrow close in on Meng Hao cause Li Ling'er to get very nervous. However, there was nothing she could do to help. As for the parrot and meat jelly, and Patriarch Reliance, they didn't seem concerned at all.

Meng Hao snorted coldly and extended his right hand, within which appeared a long spear. It had a white spearhead, and the shaft was made from the World Tree. As soon as it appeared, strange colors flashed, and boundless ripples spread out which seemed to stir the entire Ruins of Immortality.

Meng Hao hurled the spear out, causing massive rumbling to fill the starry sky. The spear shot through the void like a white dragon, both projectiles so fast that ring-like shockwaves were formed in the void through which they traveled. In the blink of an eye they were upon each other, and as they made contact a terrifyingly loud boom blasted out in all directions.

“Meng Hao, is this your true power? None of your attacks have even been able to break through my armor. Is this really the power of a true Immortal?”

Almost in the same moment that the spear and arrow slammed into each other, Meng Hao took a step forward.

“Watch and see how I break it,” he said coolly. When he took his first step, he waved his right index finger, causing boundless light to shoot up

into the starry sky. In the blink of an eye, the light formed into a fist-sized globe of light!

It was... the sun!

As soon as the sun appeared, shocking ripples spread out. However, Yi Fazi continued to laugh coldly, as if he didn't care at all about the sun. He didn't retreat at all, but instead, advanced and even revealed a second bow and arrow!

At the same time, Meng Hao took a second step, and waved his right hand again, causing the image of another shocking heavenly body to appear next to the sun.

It was... the moon!

The sun and the moon began to orbit each other, causing a massive energy to explode out. Yi Fazi's eyes widened, and in that same moment, Meng Hao took a third step.

As he stepped forward, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. Shockingly, the illusory image of a mountain appeared between the sun and the moon!

It was... the projection of the Ninth Mountain!

The sun and moon orbiting the Ninth Mountain!

Massive energy soared up, causing Yi Fazi's face to fall completely. All of a sudden, a sensation of indescribable crisis filled him, and instead of advancing, he began to back up.

However, in the moment that he stepped back, Meng Hao took a fourth step!

With that fourth step, he waved his sleeve. Rumbling filled the void as... a black pearl and a white pearl appeared and began to circulate around the Ninth Mountain and the sun and the moon!

Terrifying undulations caused Yi Fazi's eyes to widen, and he fell into shocked retreat.

"Magical technique combination! Th-that's a complex type of magic that

only almighty experts can control! How are you doing this!?!?”

Even as Yi Fazi spoke, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. He waved his right hand, and the sun, moon, and Black White Pearls continued to orbit around the Ninth Mountain as it shot toward Yi Fazi with incredible speed.

The speed was such that Yi Fazi was incapable of evading. Gritting his teeth, he roared and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then pushed his hand out in front of him. The glowing armor immediately began to emanate blinding light as he used all the power he could muster to block the attack.

Rumbling echoed out in all directions. The sun and moon collapsed, and the Ninth Mountain shattered. The Black White Pearls dissipated. However, in that same moment, all of Yi Fazi’s glowing armor shattered, layer by layer.

Yi Fazi coughed up a massive mouthful of blood, and alarm filled his face. Just when he was about to fall back at full speed, Meng Hao took a fifth step, his face filled with savagery and the desire to kill.

It was in that very moment than an ancient voice echoed out like thunder from further back.

“Stay your hand!”

The parrot blinked, and its feathers stood on end. The meat jelly began to tremble, and Patriarch Reliance turned his head, his expression one of unprecedented solemnity.

*

1. This passage “Heaven, master of mortals. Hell, master of Heaven. Lin, master of hell,” was really a headache to translate, as it’s a twist on a passage from famous Chinese philosopher Laozi. Thanks to RWX for helping out. Also, there is a big clue/easter egg about the ISSTH universe in here. Because it’s a bit more vague and open to

interpretation in Chinese, it was a subject of speculation among the Chinese fans when this chapter first came out, and was not specifically explained by Er Gen, so I'll let you guys have fun guessing about it.

Chapter 1023: The Mountain and Sea Realm Alliance!

A strange cultivator was almost able to hunt Li Ling'er down and kill her!

Unexpectedly, no one from the Li Clan showed up to stop it from happening. The situation seemed very strange, especially considering... that the Li Clan was not very far away on Planet North Reed. In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, inquiries were rarely made when ordinary cultivators fought and killed another. However, when a Chosen died or was injured, it was always a big matter!

Very few people would actually employ deadly force against a Chosen, mostly because of the numerous ramifications that would be involved.

However, this strange cultivator clearly wanted to kill Li Ling'er. Most importantly... Meng Hao's vision had been interfered with moments ago so that he couldn't see what was happening.

Clearly, this strange cultivator was not working alone. He definitely had some almighty expert hiding in the shadows, assisting him. Meng Hao had already reached such a conclusion before coming to rescue Li Ling'er. In the end, he decided that it didn't matter; he had to rescue her anyway.

Therefore, when he heard someone crying out to prevent him from landing his deadly attack on the young man, he didn't hesitate for even a moment to cry out: "Patriarch Reliance, block that man's path for a quarter of an hour, and I'll give you a hundred years of freedom!" This was only the third time he had spoken in the entire battle!

At first, Patriarch Reliance was infuriated, and he was of a mind to ignore a mere hundred years of freedom. But as he thought about it, he realized that if Meng Hao had said he would give a lifetime of freedom, it would have been completely unbelievable. But if it was only a hundred years, it actually seemed a lot more plausible.

"Fudge!" he cried. Eyes gleaming with savagery, he suddenly lifted his

head and looked at the incoming old man, then roared.

At the same time as he let out that intense roar, black light flashed around him as he shot toward the old man.

That old man was none other than the person who had been accompanying Yi Fazi the entire time. His Dao Protector!

When he saw Patriarch Reliance bearing down on him, his eyes widened with fear. Not quite sure what to make of him, he waved his hand, causing an enormous, illusory creature to appear that resembled a tadpole.

It was pitch-black and had no eyes, only a gaping mouth. As soon as it appeared, it opened its mouth wide and lunged toward Patriarch Reliance as if to swallow him.

“Fudgetastic Magical Super-Attack!” Patriarch Reliance roared, shouting as he barreled forward. Even as the words left his mouth, he was taken aback, and wondered why he had said that in particular. However, it actually seemed quite appropriate.

Rumbling filled the air as Patriarch Reliance exploded with all of his power. Normally speaking, that in and of itself wouldn't have caused the old man to pause. However, it was at this point that the old man noticed numerous beams of light radiating off of Patriarch Reliance. Instantly, his face fell, as if he had just remembered something. He appeared to be both shocked and terrified of the beams of light, and did everything he could to avoid them. As a result, he could proceed no further.

Meng Hao didn't even look back, nor did he slow down. In the blink of an eye, he was upon Yi Fazi. He clenched his fist, his eyes flickering with killing intent, and then began to punch, intent on completely destroying the defenseless Yi Fazi.

Yi Fazi's heart was pounding. In his own Realm, he had an incredibly high position. Were that not the case, he would never have qualified to come to the Ninth Mountain and Sea for a trial by fire, let alone have a Dao Protector to guard him.

However, his experience couldn't possibly compare to Meng Hao's, nor

was he a match for him in terms of viciousness. Yi Fazi couldn't imagine all of the various things that Meng Hao had experienced.

In this moment of critical danger, Yi Fazi's expression suddenly turned to one of madness. He bit down on the tip of his tongue, then spit out a mouthful of blood, which transformed into a huge, blood-colored lake that spun toward Meng Hao.

When the lake came into contact with Meng Hao's fist, it simply evaporated, turning into a blood-colored mist that quickly faded away. As for the fist... it passed directly through the mist to slam into Yi Fazi's chest.

A massive boom rang out, accompanied by cracking sounds. Blood sprayed out of Yi Fazi's mouth as his chest caved in. As he flopped backward, he felt as if there were 123 bursts of energy exploding within him. In the blink of an eye, he exploded.

However, after he exploded, Meng Hao frowned as he saw all of the bits of blood and gore form back together in midair. Terrifying ripples of power exploded out.

"Meng Hao!! I'm gonna kill you! KILL YOU!!

"You destroyed my favorite magical body! I'm going to take you... and refine you into a new magical body for myself! Meng Hao, I want you dead, DEAD, DEEAAD!"

Howls that seemed to originate from hell itself rang out from the reforming body, filled with boundless rancor and insanity.

As the words echoed out, the shattered flesh rapidly congealed back together, materializing into something that didn't look like Yi Fazi had moments ago, but rather...

A three-headed creature with a long, undulating tail. It looked like neither a human nor a Demon!

The first head looked like Yi Fazi's, the second was half-python, half-human, vicious and fierce. The third head was completely snake-like, complete with a flicking, forked tongue.

“Meng Hao,” he cried in a shocking, piercing voice. “I’m gonna tear you to shreds! I’ll baptize myself in your blood to complete my Immortal foundation!”

When Meng Hao saw the reformed Yi Fazi, his eyes widened. Li Ling’er also saw him, and her heart began to thump.

Meng Hao’s mind thrummed as he looked at Yi Fazi. He had never seen any entity such as this before. He had seen Demons, things like mountains or rivers personified, but those were true Greater Demons.

But he had never seen anything at all that looked like this. It was like a beast, but not. Like a cultivator, but not.

Even more shocking... Meng Hao realized that the Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding was suddenly vibrating at a frequency unlike anything he had ever experienced before.

Those vibrations even exceeded what he had felt when he had acquired the Fifth Hex, or when he had encountered the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

It was as if an enmity and hatred that could not be wiped away with the passage of time was suddenly exploding out from the Demon Sealing Jade with incredible intensity.

“A Lower Realms rebel! Bloodline of the Zheng Clan! When we Demon Sealers encounter someone like this, he MUST DIE!

“Die. Die. DIE!! DIEEE!!” Meng Hao’s mind rumbled with the ancient voice of the Demon Sealing Jade. An intense murderous aura erupted out from his Demon Sealer Immortal meridian, which immediately began to rotate.

Apparently, if Meng Hao did not slaughter this so-called Lower Realms rebel, then his Demon Sealer Immortal meridian would no longer approve of him!

This was an intense madness and hatred that Meng Hao had never felt before in his entire life.

Almost as soon as Yi Fazi's true appearance was made manifest, the old man who was tangled up with Patriarch Reliance suddenly went berserk. "Fool! IMBECILE! Y-y-you... dammit, you already lost! Why didn't you just go back right away! Why would you possibly be so idiotic as to reveal your true form here! Dammit! DAMMIT! You people from the Zheng Clan are all MORONS!!!"

He appeared to be completely enraged, and was trembling all over. In addition to the rage on his face, there was also terror and anxiety. It was as if Yi Fazi revealing this form would cause a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering catastrophe.

In the same moment that Yi Fazi revealed his body, a howl could be heard coming from the Ji Clan's ancestral mansion on the Ninth Mountain. That howl instantly echoed out to fill the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Not everyone could hear it, though. Only Dao Realm experts were able to detect the shrill and abrupt call.

It was a sound that hadn't been heard for a very, very long time!

The shocking cry caused the faces all of the Dao Realm Patriarchs in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to flicker.

That was especially true of the Three Great Daoist Societies. Instantly, all of their Dao Realm experts flew out, their faces serious and even nervous.

The entire Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain was equally shaken. Their Dao Realm experts began to pant as they charged out toward the rear of the Ji Clan ancestral mansion, where... at the peak of the Ninth Mountain, was a celestial pond!

Its waters were as clear as glass, and were covered by wisps of white mist. However, at the bottom of the pond, nine bronze cauldrons were visible. Each of the cauldrons emanated an air of extreme ancientness, as if they had existed within the stream of time for an indescribable length of time.

In the center of the nine cauldrons, shockingly... was an enormous Xuanwu turtle.

That Xuanwu turtle and those nine cauldrons were not items that belonged to the Ji Clan.

In fact, you could say that they did not belong to any clan or sect at all. They belonged... to the Ninth Mountain!

Any clan or sect who became the Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea would have control of them!

The Xuanwu turtle's back bristled with sharp spikes, each one of which was covered by countless magical symbols. It looked incredibly fierce as it sat there, its back just barely protruding out of the water. For years, it had remained in that exact position, unmoving, as if it were a statue.

However, moments ago, the gigantic Xuanwu turtle had suddenly moved! A tremor ran through it as it rose up and howled, a terrifying howl that echoed out into the starry sky.

Everything shook, and the pond water seethed. The nine cauldrons began to shake.

The Dao Realm experts of the Ji Clan were all getting incredibly nervous. They looked at the howling Xuanwu turtle, and their faces fell.

The howl seemed to indicate that the Xuanwu turtle was enduring indescribable pain.

"What happened! Wh-why is the Xuanwu turtle howling as if in pain!?!?"

"Could it be that someone has made an incursion into our Ji Clan?!?!"

"No, I don't think so. Now that I think about it, there's a legend in the Ninth Mountain...."

Even as the Dao Realm experts were quivering in shock, suddenly, an enormous eye appeared in the sky above the Ninth Mountain!

Within that eye could just barely be seen the image of an old man sitting cross-legged in meditation.

In the instant the eye appeared, the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea trembled.

An ancient voice suddenly echoed out from within the eye: “Outsiders have entered the Ninth Mountain and Sea! Comply with the ancient treaty of the Mountain and Sea Realm Alliance! Slaughter the Outsiders!!”

*

Note from Deathblade: The following is Er Gen’s note, not mine....

Note from Er Gen: If all goes as planned, I’ll return home tonight. However, my daughter’s tests at the hospital haven’t been finished. There are still some more things that need to be checked out. However, unless something unforeseen happens, I’ll be home tomorrow night, which means I’ll return to my normal schedule the day after. Thank you everyone, I hope you can understand.

Chapter 1024: A Paragon Slaughters a Dao Protector!

Almost as soon as the sound echoed out, all of the Dao Realm experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were shaken. At the same time, a shocking image appeared in their minds.

It was an image of the general location Meng Hao currently occupied in the Ruins of Immortality!

Obviously, the image was a form of guidance, telling the Dao Realm experts that the Outsiders... were in the Ruins of Immortality!

In the blink of an eye, roughly half of the Dao Realm experts suddenly stepped out into the starry sky and began to speed in that direction. Fang Shoudao was one of them. He and the experts from the Three Great Daoist Societies were among the first to head toward the Ruins of Immortality.

On Planet North Reed, the Patriarch and others from the Li Clan also headed in the direction of the location of the image they had seen.

This sudden turn of events shocked them all to the core, and was clearly not a plot by the Ji Clan. This matter... was momentous. Not even the Ji Clan would have the gall to scheme in this way.

At the same moment in which the Dao Realm experts employed their top speed to head toward the Ruins of Immortality, the old man who was facing off with Patriarch Reliance felt his scalp go numb, and his face go pale. He was well aware of the danger they were now in because of Yi Fazi revealing his true form.

“Moron! Imbecile!” the old man raged inwardly. “Accursed, Heaven-damned Zheng Clan! You were all like this back then, and now this kid is the same! Fool! Moron!!” At the same time, he was extremely apprehensive and nervous. He knew all too well what would happen after Yi Fazi revealed his true form. He also knew that even though only nine mountains remained of the Immortal World, and that it was no longer the

grand entity which ruled over 3,000 Lower Realms... even still, the Paragon Immortal Realm still held powerful entities that caused his scalp to go numb.

The old man was also well aware of the deep-seated and complex hatred that the people from the Paragon Immortal Realm harbored against the other two major forces from that ancient war. However, even more importantly, he knew that what the Paragon Immortal Realm hated more than anything else was not those two other powers, but rather... all of the Lower Realms which rebelled against the Immortal World in the war!

The Spiritstar Realm was one of those Lower Realms!

The old man gnashed his teeth and completely ignored Yi Fazi. He backed up rapidly, waving his hand to cause the ship to appear. As soon as he set foot inside, he turned the ship around and began to flee.

He intended to employ the fastest speed possible to escape from this world before any of the other cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea could react to his presence. Based on the level of his cultivation base, he could already sense the auras of numerous powerful experts flying in his direction.

Those people, he could afford to ignore. However, he could also sense that somewhere out there, there was an even more fearsome existence that permeated the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“The Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea... Ji Tian! That moron Yi Fazi really screwed things up this time!” The old man’s face was grim, and he gritted his teeth as he sent the ship flying forward. Then he bit the tip of his tongue, then spit out some blood, even burning some of his longevity to achieve a temporary burst of speed. He ripped through the starry sky at incredible speed, piercing out into the void. In a flash, he was on the verge of merging into the void itself.

It was at this point that, deep within the Ruins of Immortality, in what seemed to be an ordinary Immortal’s cave, a white-robed woman sat cross-legged in meditation. She slowly opened her eyes, and they glinted with icy cold light.

It was a coldness that encompassed hatred, rage, and the desire to kill. She slowly lifted her right hand and waved her finger toward the void.

That finger caused an illusory thread to snake out into the distance. In the blink of an eye, it pierced through the entire Ruins of Immortality, slashing through the void toward the old man and his ship.

The old man hadn't noticed anything strange happening, and was just on the verge of disappearing, when all of a sudden, his face fell. He was about to turn to look behind him when... his head flew off of his shoulders and blood sprayed up like a geyser.

The thread, like a long strand of hair, flashed past and then disappeared without a trace.

The old man's eyes went wide and his head tumbled through the void, causing his view of the world around him to spin about. He was baffled about what had happened until the moment he died, when he suddenly realized the truth.

"Para... gon...." The old man's head transformed into ash along with his body.

The ship was now no longer capable of merging into the void, and gradually became visible again. Patriarch Reliance glanced at it and then gobbled it up. After he swallowed it, a tremor ran through him. He looked at the vanishing strand of hair, then peered deep into the Ruins of Immortality, his expression somewhat blank.

He suddenly seemed to have recalled something important from the distant past, but no matter how much he tried to think about it, everything was vague and blurry.

Meng Hao also saw the old man die, and his heart trembled. Then he looked into the depths of the Ruins of Immortality, and recalled that woman in the white robes.

When Yi Fazi saw his Dao Protector die, his scalp went numb, his mind filled with roaring, and his expression was one of fear. He had never had any sense of awe regarding the Nine Mountains and Seas, but now... he

was absolutely terrified.

“W-what... what power was that? It actually killed my Dao Protector in one blow!!” Yi Fazi was panting, and his eyes were wide as his heart pounded loudly.

All of a sudden, numerous legends regarding this place began to rise up in his mind. He began to shiver, and slowly backed up. The only thing on his mind now was to flee. All of his surging power and momentum from before now collapsed and faded away.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. For the moment, he didn't even think about Li Ling'er. Considering Yi Fazi's true form, as well as the words which had just been spoken, along with the intense killing intent from the Demon Sealing Jade, there was no way Meng Hao was going to allow him to get away. There were too many things he wanted to know, answers... that Yi Fazi could provide!

Meng Hao didn't even pay attention to the opportunity Patriarch Reliance now had to escape. He instantly flashed through the air in pursuit of Yi Fazi.

Now that Yi Fazi had changed form, he had experienced an increase in both cultivation base and speed. In a short moment, he was quite a distance away. Rumbling filled the air as he also sped away at top speed.

He was scared, and the main thing he was concerned about was escaping Meng Hao. Then he would find a secluded place where he could figure out a way to return home. At the moment, he had no idea how he would do that. However, his Dao Protector was dead, and he had no desire to end up the same. Trembling, he screamed inwardly.

“Dad will definitely sense that my Dao Protector is dead! He'll come save me! All I have to do is find a place to hide, and Dad will eventually find me!

“Damned Immortal World. Screw this place! Why couldn't it have been completely destroyed all those years ago!?!?”

“And then there's that damned Meng Hao. I'm not such a bad guy, why

does he have to push things so far!?” Cursing inwardly, Yi Fazi increased his speed. Meng Hao chased him, and the two of them proceeded deeper into the Ruins of Immortality.

Patriarch Reliance blinked a few times. Looking enraged, he made to follow Meng Hao, but actually flew slower and slower. At the same time, his voice grew louder and louder.

“Stop running! The Patriarch is definitely going to catch you!

“Still running!? You’re really pissing me off! I’m gonna chase you down with all my might!

“I’m mad as hell now!” As he roared, Patriarch Reliance’s beady eyes darted back and forth. Eventually, Meng Hao disappeared off into the distance, whereupon Patriarch Reliance did an about-face, employing his top speed to flee in a different direction.

The parrot and meat jelly were still on top of him, as was Li Ling’er. They watched in shock as Patriarch Reliance took to flight.

After a few breaths of time, Patriarch Reliance used some unknown method to appear in another area of the Ruins of Immortality. Then, he shook the continent on his back, causing the parrot and meat jelly, as well as Li Ling’er, to be flung off of him.

“SCREW OFF!!!” he roared. “From here on out, the Patriarch is footloose and fancy free! Hahaha! Yet again, the Patriarch is the smartest of all. He knows how to take advantage of all opportunities!

“Meng Hao you little bastard, you just wait! Our business isn’t finished!!

“I hereby swear that this time, you’ll NEVER find me, you son of a biscuit!!” Patriarch Reliance was virtually dancing about. He threw his head back and roared. Having tossed Li Ling’er, the parrot, and the meat jelly aside, he then sped off into the distance.

Meanwhile, in another location in the Ruins of Immortality, Meng Hao’s killing intent raged into the Heavens. His cultivation base exploded with power, and the 33 Heavens surrounded him. However, Yi Fazi was moving with incredible speed. Although they were able to fight back and forth a

bit, Yi Fazi never slowed down. Nevertheless, under the relentless pursuit, his injuries began to accumulate.

Even so, he used some unknown secret magic that eventually caused his speed to accelerate explosively. There were even many points where he was about to shake Meng Hao off his trail. However, each time Meng Hao was also able to use the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex to continuously break his momentum and allow him to make up for lost ground.

Several days of chasing went by. Eventually, they reached an area where a gargantuan floating head rose up just ahead of them.

The head had eyes that looked like black holes, as if someone had dug the eyeballs out in years past. Although it was a complete head, there was actually a huge fissure which split it from the crown of the head down.

Also, a miserable and ancient will seeped out from inside of the head.

As the head neared, an incredible pressure weighed down, forcing Yi Fazi to slow down. When that happened, his face fell.

It was in that instant that Meng Hao closed in from behind. Lifting his hand, he unleashed the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

As soon as he waved his finger, Yi Fazi's body trembled.

"Not good!" At the same time, killing intent erupted in Meng Hao's eyes. He raised his right hand, causing the Star Plucking Magic to grab toward Yi Fazi.

Yi Fazi threw his head back and howled. Innumerable beams of black light began to emanate off of him, transforming into countless black bats which then shot madly toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling could be heard as Yi Fazi borrowed the force of the collision and once again shot forward. He was just on the verge of evading the Star Plucking Magic, when Meng Hao's hand grabbed onto his wings. He wrenched viciously, and Yi Fazi let out a miserable shriek as the wings were ripped off of him. Blood sprayed out of the wounds, and Yi Fazi's face went ashen. He staggered backward, gritting his teeth and speeding away.

Meng Hao's killing intent hadn't lessened in the least. The Demon Sealing Jade was vibrating more madly than ever as he put the severed wings into his bag of holding. Eyes shining as cold as knives, he once again gave chase.

It was at this same time that the Dao Realm experts began to enter the Ruins of Immortality and search for the Outsiders. The shrill cry of the Xuanwu turtle continued to echo out.

Until all the Outsiders were dead, it would never return to sleep.

Chapter 1025: Soulsearching Yi Fazi

The Xuanwu turtle's intense cry echoed out through the Ninth Mountain and Sea into the ears of all individuals qualified to hear it. As the Dao Realm experts entered the Ruins of Immortality, a towering killing intent continued to surge through the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Kill the Outsiders! That was the will of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Although Meng Hao could not hear the cry of the Xuanwu turtle, the Demon Sealing Jade inside of his bag of holding was vibrating with unprecedented intensity. It emanated a fervent hatred that merged into Meng Hao. It was as if... the League of Demon Sealers harbored infinite detestation towards all of these so-called Outsiders, a hatred so fierce that it could only be sated by killing any of them that he met!

Meng Hao was the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, so the feeling was almost overwhelming. However, even without the urging of the Demon Sealing Jade, Meng Hao would still have chosen to kill Yi Fazi. Naturally, the way that Yi Fazi had provoked him and had acted completely shamelessly ensured that Meng Hao would never let him go.

Yi Fazi immediately fell back. Waving his hand, he caused the numerous black bats which had appeared moments ago to fill the sky and then descend onto Meng Hao in an attempt to halt his progress.

Meng Hao snorted coldly and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Suddenly, a Blood Demon head appeared, so huge that it completely covered Meng Hao. It shot forward, slamming into the bats, causing miserable shrieks to ring out. In the blink of an eye, the Blood Demon head caused a red glow to spread out, which consumed the bats.

Meng Hao turned into a red beam of blinding light which pierced through the void of the Ruins of Immortality, pursuing Yi Fazi relentlessly.

Yi Fazi's pale face was filled with an expression of terror and shock. He had known Meng Hao to be powerful, but this strength... had surpassed anything he could have imagined.

“Dammit! DAMMIT!!” Yi Fazi had long since realized that despite revealing his true self, he was still no match for Meng Hao. His time was up and he couldn’t afford to get bogged down here; his Dao Protector was dead, leaving him trembling in fear. He knew that if he was incapable of shaking off Meng Hao’s pursuit, then the only thing that awaited him was... death!

To be killed in body and soul!!

Yi Fazi threw his heads back and roared. His eyes were bright red, and although his wings had been ripped off, he still had three heads left. As the heads roared, black rings of light shot out from their foreheads.

Three rings of light emanated mysterious glows as he jerked his heads, transforming into light beams that shot toward Meng Hao.

“Life Force Light!” he cried, performing an incantation gesture, his eyes shining with madness.

As soon as the three black beams of light appeared, the flicker of electricity could be seen in Meng Hao’s right hand. The Lightning Cauldron flickered, and in the same moment that the black beams bore down on him, he looked over at Yi Fazi and suddenly, the two of them switched places. Yi Fazi had no idea what was happening.

The beams of light screeched to a stop right in front of Yi Fazi, causing his scalp to go numb. He could do nothing but stare in shock as Meng Hao waved his hand, causing tens of thousands of mountains to appear, which rumbled as they smashed down onto Yi Fazi.

“Meng Hao,” he howled, “if you let me go, then I, Yi Fazi, will owe you a huge favor!!” He performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then stretched both hands out wide. Immediately, the three beams of black light twisted around, transforming into a black tempest that fought back against the tens of thousands of mountains. At the same time, Yi Fazi spun, changing directions and shooting off like lightning.

Meng Hao didn’t say a word. When he saw Yi Fazi changing directions, his eyes glittered, and the Lightning Cauldron once again appeared. Electricity danced, and yet, black light surrounded Yi Fazi, fighting back

against the transposition power. In a rare turn of events... the Lightning Cauldron failed!

“Eee?!” said Meng Hao. Yi Fazi then exploded with speed, transforming into a colorful streak of light that immediately sped off into the surrounding ruins and corpses floating around this part of the Ruins of Immortality. Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph, waving his right hand and pointing toward the fleeing Yi Fazi.

“Paragon Bridge!” As soon as the words left Meng Hao’s mouth, rumbling filled the air. A Heaven-shaking, Earth-rocking bridge suddenly appeared. As it rumbled down into the Ruins of Immortality, boundless ripples spread out, blocking Yi Fazi’s path. Yi Fazi’s was thoroughly and completely shocked, and he suddenly stopped in place. Even the mere ripples caused him to cough up a massive mouthful of blood. A look of madness filled his face.

“Meng Hao!!” He let out a shrill cry, gnashing his teeth as he performed another incantation gesture. Black light flickered around him, and his three heads all screamed something like a magic curse. Behind him, a gigantic, illusory statue appeared. Shockingly, the statue... depicted an enormous black python. As soon as it appeared, it emanated a terrifying aura.

Apparently, this entity was some sort of spirit that had existed in this Realm in previous times. The sense of ancientness it exuded was shocking, and caused the Ruins of Immortality to tremble.

Gradually, a murderous aura built up and then exploded out from the statue.

“Ancestor, I humbly request your presence!” roared Yi Fazi. The statue rumbled, and as it grew more and more corporeal, it opened its mouth and lashed out toward the Paragon Bridge.

A boom could be heard, and the Paragon Bridge trembled and collapsed. In that same moment, though, the illusory python statue was also shattered. A massive shock wave spread out in all directions, causing innumerable ruins and corpses to be blasted away. Meng Hao was forced

backward several paces, his face flickering in shock.

Blood sprayed out of Yi Fazi's mouth, and his eyes shone with madness. The python statue might have been destroyed, but Yi Fazi was now surrounded by a gigantic stone egg that completely covered him up as he shot into the distance like a meteor.

His current speed was several times faster than his speed from moments ago.

Just when he seemed on the verge of disappearing, Meng Hao's killing intent flared. The starstone in his left eye flickered and reappeared in his palm. It then melted into starlight, which rapidly surrounded Meng Hao as he transformed into a planet.

As soon as the planet appeared, it sped through the void with vastly greater speed than Meng Hao had used before. It crushed everything in its path, and its surging energy caused everything to shake violently.

Faster and faster, closer and closer to Yi Fazi!

As for Yi Fazi himself, the pressure weighing down on him reduced his own speed. In the space of only ten breaths of time, Meng Hao in planet-form had already caught up with him. In the blink of an eye, the planet slammed into the stone egg that was protecting Yi Fazi.

BOOOOMMMMMM!

A huge rumbling sound rose up into the sky, shaking everything. The stone egg shattered, and Yi Fazi let out a miserable shriek. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and of his three heads, the one that was human-shaped, suddenly exploded.

Yi Fazi trembled violently and staggered backward, crying out in despair, "Dad, save me!!"

Even as the sound rang out, he drew upon the flame of his life force to utilize a bizarre magical technique to project his voice through the void and outside of the Mountain and Sea Realm into the Realm from which he had come.

An instant later, a powerful and terrifying pressure began to push down onto the Ruins of Immortality!

At this point, Meng Hao in planet-form shrank down, transforming into his normal appearance and then walking forward. Coldness radiated off of him as he extended his right index finger.

“Demon Sealing, Seventh Hex, Karmic Hexing!”

The wave of Meng Hao’s finger caused countless Karma Threads to appear around Yi Fazi, Karma Threads that no other person would be able to see. However, Meng Hao could see them, spreading out and fusing into the void, where they seemed to be about to touch that terrifying pressure which was weighing down.

Before they could, the tip of Meng Hao’s finger descended, and the Karma Threads began to tremble. In the blink of an eye, they retracted, almost as if they had been locked down, and were now incapable of spreading out from Yi Fazi’s body.

“NO!!” screamed Yi Fazi, his expression one of despair. More blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he backed up further. At the same time, Meng Hao closed in, eyes flickering with the desire to kill as he waved another finger.

“Demon Sealing, Fifth Hex!”

A rift suddenly appeared in front of Meng Hao’s finger, only a few centimeters long. However, in the instant that it materialized, a terrifying power exploded out toward Yi Fazi. It slammed into his second head, which let out a bloodcurdling scream. Then a rumbling sound could be heard as the head appeared to be swallowed up by the void, and then vanished.

“Don’t kill me! Meng Hao, spare me, and you’ll sow good fortune with the Spiritstar Realm! I’ll definitely pay you back many times over!!

“I’ll give you endless cultivation resources, endless power! Anything you want, I’ll give it to y–” Yi Fazi’s final remaining head was quivering as he pleaded with Meng Hao. His heart was filled with regret, and his despair

had reached the pinnacle.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he walked forward, raised his right hand, and waved it toward Yi Fazi. Yi Fazi's body emitted rumbling sounds as his chest caved in. His right arm exploded into a haze of blood, after which Meng Hao transformed into a golden roc. He slashed at Yi Fazi with his claws, completely shredding half of his body.

Blood oozed out of Yi Fazi's mouth. However, despite having received such a grievous injury, he was still alive. Trembling, vision swimming, he was about to try to flee, when a strange light began to gleam in Meng Hao's eyes.

He didn't simply want to kill Yi Fazi. More importantly... he wanted to know the Yi Fazi's origin, and the secrets he held within him. Therefore, he was gradually weakening him, and not just killing him outright.

Just as Yi Fazi was backing up, Meng Hao took a step forward and appeared behind him. He lifted his hand, and, eyes gleaming with a strange light... slapped his palm down hard onto the top of Yi Fazi's head.

"Soulsearch!" This was a sinister magical technique he had learned in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, a way to rifle through the soul and see a person's memories.

Yi Fazi trembled, and his eye bulged as he let out the most bloodcurdling scream he had let out during the entire battle. His body shook violently as indescribable pain wracked him.

At the same time, a tremor ran through Meng Hao. As he Soulsearched Yi Fazi, memories suddenly appeared in his mind.

"This...." he thought, heart trembling. It was as if he were being struck by uncountable bolts of lightning, all of them exploding in his head and shaking his mind.

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Note from Er Gen (not Deathblade): Back to the normal release schedule. The past few days have been exhausting. Thank you for your understanding, brothers and sisters. Thank you!

Chapter 1026: 33 Realms; Mountain and Sea Tribulation!

As soon as Meng Hao pushed his hand down onto Yi Fazi's head, his mind filled with rumbling sounds so intense it felt like it would explode. Numerous images and vast amounts of information poured into him from Yi Fazi's brain. Meng Hao's divine sense fused with Yi Fazi's memories, and he was able to see everything clearly.

He trembled, and began to pant, his eyes shining with disbelief. Although he had prepared himself mentally, he was still profoundly shocked by what he saw in Yi Fazi's memories.

Yi Fazi screamed miserably as he experienced more pain than he had ever experienced before in his life. Never in his dreams could he possibly have imagined that someone who was as important as he was in the Spiritstar Realm would one day be Soulseached.

He frothed at the mouth, and his bloodshot eyes bulged out dramatically. His body twitched violently as he experienced a sensation like a giant hand rifling through his brain, grabbing things from inside of his head. The pain... was literally impossible to describe!!

His screams were enough to cause anyone to seize with terror.

Meng Hao's hand seem to be exuding an incredibly powerful gravitational force as it latched onto Yi Fazi. No matter how violently Yi Fazi struggled, it was impossible for him to escape Meng Hao's grasp.

At the moment, Meng Hao had no time to even pay attention to Yi Fazi's struggling. He panted as he looked at the thoroughly shocking images playing out in front of him.

"This...." he murmured.

He was looking at... an entire world!

In this world, everything was the opposite of how it should be. The sky was below and the earth was above. All of the buildings and mountains

and rivers were suspended from up above.

The sun, the heavenly bodies, the moon, were all down below!

If you stood on those heavenly bodies, or on the surface of the sun, and looked up, you would see endless lands, filled with mountains and ancient cities.

Within the cities, statues could be seen, each one depicting a nine-headed python!

Meng Hao could also see innumerable life forms. Most of them looked just like Yi Fazi, neither completely human nor completely beastly.

There were some that looked like ordinary cultivators. However, Meng Hao got the feeling that even though they wore that appearance, they were actually just like those other part-human, part-beast beings. The aura they emitted was one of complete brutality and mania. They were cold, with explosive murderous auras.

This... was not any place in the Nine Mountains and Seas.

This was... a world that existed outside of the Nine Mountains and Seas!

Although Meng Hao had never actually left the Ninth Mountain and Sea, now that he could clearly see and sense Yi Fazi's home, he could tell that the natural law and the undulations in that world were different than what he knew.

It was a brutal place that was diametrically opposed to his own world. It was as if in this other world, slaughter was the most powerful natural law.

"What is this place?!" he thought, gasping as his mind spun. Earlier, he had been certain that Yi Fazi's origin was mysterious, but now that he could see this other world with his own eyes, he was absolutely certain that Yi Fazi... was most definitely not a being from the Nine Mountains and Seas.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao caught sight of that other world, information from Yi Fazi's memories suddenly began to crash into Meng Hao's mind. They exploded thunderously inside of him, threatening

to turn what he knew of the world upside down.

“In ancient times, the Higher Realm had Immortals!

“Where there were Immortals, Paragons were born among them. Because of the position of that Realm, and because of its incredible power, it came to be known as... the Paragon Immortal Realm!

“The Paragon Immortal Realm, the first Realm in all the Heavens and the starry sky!

“Beneath it were 3,000 other Realms that relied on the Paragon Immortal Realm to survive. From generation to generation, they worshiped the Immortal World. Countless living beings practiced cultivation with the hopes of being able to fly up and enter the Immortal World.

“Everyone sought to reach Immortal Ascension!

“Spirits Realm, Star Realm, Waterwood Realm, Deva Realm, Spiritstar Realm, Torrentfall Realm.... 3,000 Realms, all of which bowed in worship to the Paragon Immortal Realm!

“Anyone who descended from the Paragon Immortal Realm to one of those other 3,000 Lower Realms would be like a god!

“Epochs came and went, and after an incalculable amount of time passed, catastrophe struck....

“Everything that happened during that catastrophe was recorded on a huge mural that had existed for eons in the Spiritstar Realm.... On that day, in one part of the starry sky nine suns appeared, which dragged an enormous, colorful statue to sweep across the skies. The statue depicted a man whose hair was eternally white! 1

“On that day, in another part of the starry sky, nine butterflies appeared, dragging an enormous coffin that crushed the void. That coffin was carved with the depictions of all living things!

“Both of those powers were strong enough to rival the Paragon Immortal Realm, and make all of the 3,000 Lower Realms tremble in fear.

“The catastrophe had just begun... a war began in which all of the 3,000 Lower Realms turned traitor. At the critical juncture, they rebelled against the countless epochs in which the Paragon Immortal Realm had weighed down on them. They joined with those other powerful forces to destroy the Paragon Immortal Realm!

“In that war... the Immortal World was shattered. Countless members of the Immortal bloodlines died, and numerous ancient Immortals perished. The powerful Allheaven Dao Immortals perished, and the nine Emperors died. The only survivors were three great Paragons, who used some unknown magical technique to form nine mountains and nine seas that became the broken remnants of the Immortal World. 2

“By the time the war ended, more than ninety percent of the 3,000 Lower Realms were destroyed. In the end, only 33 Realms remained, which rose to prominence and glory, acting like 33 locks, sealing the Immortal World completely!

“Later, those 33 Realms took to killing Immortals for pleasure, as a hobby. People who killed Immortals and were baptized in their blood would become famous in all of the 33 Realms!”

Meng Hao trembled as all of the information poured into his mind. He didn't realize it, but as this was happening, Yi Fazi gradually grew weaker and stopped struggling.

Fissures began to spread out over his head, and the flame of his life force was gradually being extinguished. His soul was beginning to collapse, and his life force was being exterminated.

Gradually, his body grew cold, and his eyes turned gray.

Cracking sounds could be heard as the information in Meng Hao's mind turned into something like a windstorm. Unaware of what he was even doing, and unable to control his own power, he instantly crushed Yi Fazi's head into bits.

When the head exploded, Yi Fazi's body fell down into the void and gradually became a part of the Ruins of Immortality. Meng Hao lowered his hand and made a grasping motion, collecting a ring that had belonged

to Yi Fazi.

In the moment that Yi Fazi died, the screaming Xuanwu turtle suddenly quieted down. Its body no longer trembled, and it once again sank down into the pond, unmoving.

The water in the celestial pond returned to normal. No ripples could be seen on its surface, which once again resembled a mirror.

The cultivators of the Ji Clan breathed sighs of relief. At the same time, Ji Tian's voice echoed out into the minds of the Dao Realm experts in the Ruins of Immortality.

"Fellow Daoists. Ladies and gentlemen. Please be informed... the Outsiders have been hunted down and killed."

The massive waves of shock that had filled the Ninth Mountain and Sea now faded away. The Dao Realm experts who were already in the Ruins of Immortality stopped in place. After looking around at the mysterious ruins around them, they turned and left.

Fang Shoudao hesitated for a moment, and then also chose to leave.

The Ruins of Immortality returned to normal. Everything quieted down. The eternally drifting corpses continued their neverending journeys.

Deep within the ruins, Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes were blank. Currently, all of the information he had gleaned from the Soulsearh swirled around inside his mind.

After a long moment, a complex expression appeared on his face. Although he didn't completely believe everything he had acquired from Yi Fazi's memories, based on what he already knew, as well as his powers of reasoning, he was eighty percent confident that most of it was real.

"So, is that really the history of the Nine Mountains and Seas?" he murmured.

"The Paragon Immortal Realm.... That explains some of the strange things I heard back on Planet South Heaven.

"Immortals...." His eyes began to shine with a bright light.

“The League of Demon Sealers must have something to do with the Nine Mountains and Seas,” he muttered. “In fact, there is a high likelihood that they also have something to do with those three great Paragons!” With that, he lifted his head and looked up into the starry sky.

“33 Realms, standing guard outside.... Looking down upon the Nine Mountains and Seas....

“33 Realms, 33 Heavens....” As he followed this train of thought, he recalled something that he had heard from both the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer and the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer’s jade slip....

“Mountain and Sea Tribulation....

“Each generation of the League of Demon Sealers must attempt to transcend the Mountain and Sea Tribulation. Clearly, that is the tribulation destined for each generation of the League of Demon Sealers. In other words... they want to fight their way through the 33 Realms, slaughter them to break through to freedom!” Meng Hao took a deep breath. His mind trembled for a long time before he finally calmed himself. He knew that despite knowing about this secret, with the low level of his cultivation base, it would be impossible for him to completely understand it, nor do anything about it.

“The Echelon....” he thought, eyes shining brightly. Finally, he looked around, picked a direction, and began to fly. He took all of his doubts and speculations and buried them deep inside. He knew that the most important thing right now was to leave the deadly and mysterious Ruins of Immortality. He needed to get to the Ninth Sea, and the Nine Seas God World.

“I need to go to the Nine Seas God World to collect the reward owed to me by the Three Great Daoist Societies. Then, in the Three Great Daoist Societies, I can grow stronger, step into the Ancient Realm... and then begin to search for my way into the Dao Realm!

“If every generation of the League of Demon Sealers has to face the Mountain and Sea Tribulation, then I need to continue to get more powerful. Eventually, the day will come... when I will make my own

attempt to break through the veil that covers the Nine Mountains and Seas! I will make my own determination... of whether the information in Yi Fazi's memories is true or false!" His eyes shone with the gleam of obsession, and his trembling heart gradually returned to normal.

He turned into a bright beam of light that sped through the Ruins of Immortality. As he traveled, he looked at the ruins and corpses floating about, and thought about the legends regarding the Ruins of Immortality. Supposedly... they were a piece of the Immortal World that broke off during that huge war.

He flew along silently, divine sense spread out in all directions. He carefully avoided any dangerous locations, and was frequently forced to stop in place while various dilapidated statues or other gigantic creatures passed by. At the same time, images from ancient times rose up in his mind, images similar to what he was currently seeing.

Time passed. Soon, half a month had gone by.

During that time, Meng Hao passed through the center of the Ruins of Immortality. At times, he flew along with explosive speed. Other times he slowed to a crawl. At one point, he turned his head to find that, not too far off in the distance, was an area that was completely black, filled with countless weeds. Many of them... were actually rare Immortal plants that were extinct in the outside world!

As soon as he saw that area, he felt like his scalp would explode.

"Well if it isn't..." His eyes widened.

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1. Regarding the man with white hair, I suggest you click the link to the following baidu image search (<http://image.baidu.com/search/index?tn=baiduimage&ipn=r&ct=201326592&cl=2&lm=-1&st=-1&fm=result&fr=8&word=wang+lin+xian+ni>), look at the search terms, and then check out the first few picture results.... I'm not saying that the person in those images is being referenced here, but it's certainly something

that would have crossed the minds of Er Gen fans. Alternative search with more art here: [http://image.baidu.com/search/index?ct=201326592&cl=2&st=-1&lm=-1&nc=1&ie=utf-](http://image.baidu.com/search/index?ct=201326592&cl=2&st=-1&lm=-1&nc=1&ie=utf-8&tn=baiduimage&ipn=r&rps=1&pv=&fm=rs1&word=%E4%BB%99%E9%)

[8&tn=baiduimage&ipn=r&rps=1&pv=&fm=rs1&word=%E4%BB%99%E9%](http://image.baidu.com/search/index?ct=201326592&cl=2&st=-1&lm=-1&nc=1&ie=utf-8&tn=baiduimage&ipn=r&rps=1&pv=&fm=rs1&word=%E4%BB%99%E9%)

2. When this chapter was originally released, “Allheaven Dao Immortals” was translated as “Luotian Dao Immortals.” Going forward, I will be using the term “Allheaven” for “Luotian.” Luotian 罗天 is a concept from real Daoist mythology. Among all the various heavens that exist, it is the absolute highest heaven. Luo 罗 is a character which can be translated a lot of ways, but in this situation basically means “net.” The idea is that this heaven stretches out to cover over all the other heavens like a net. However, instead of calling it Net Heaven (sounds like a bad internet cafe or perhaps a fishing shop), I will use “Allheaven.” Incidentally, I’ve translated the character luo 罗 as “sieve” also in the past, most notably in the name of the Black Sieve Sect”.

Chapter 1027: Stirring Up a Sea of Insects!

It was a land covered with endless grasses that seemed very different from the first time Meng Hao had laid eyes on it. Most of the grasses here were violet; they rose up tall and swayed back and forth gently.

Rustling sounds floated across the land, but other than that, everything was silent.

Nestled amongst all the violet grass could be seen a variety of medicinal plants. There were Sun Blossoms, Immortality Illumination Vines, and other similar plants. There were even some types of plants rarer than those.

You could say that this place... was like an indescribably valuable medicinal plant garden.

However, Meng Hao would never be able to forget how, although this quiet and peaceful place might look like a treasure trove to any other cultivator, it was actually filled with countless terrifying black beetles!

The black earth... was actually black because it was covered by the beetles. That was not even to mention the fact that... the entire area actually rested on the back of a shockingly gigantic black beetle.

It wasn't just Meng Hao. Even someone in the Dao Realm would be so scared their scalp would tingle, and they would be forced to avoid the entire area.

Almost as soon as Meng Hao caught sight of the land of violet grass, the grass swayed so much that the ground was visible in some places, and it seemed to be writhing and undulating.

Meng Hao's face flickered, and he instantly lifted his right hand and performed an incantation gesture. Numerous sealing marks appeared on him, stacking up one on top of another, forcing his cultivation base down at rapid speed.

Within a few breaths of time, a droning sound rose up from the land. Next, the ground itself looked as if a layer of it were peeling upward as

innumerable vicious, black beetles flew up into the air.

As soon as they flew up, they transformed into something like a windstorm that swept screaming up into the air. Their target was none other than Meng Hao, hovering there in midair.

Apparently, there was something on him that aroused extreme aggressiveness on their part.

Meng Hao's face fell. He had almost forgotten that these black beetles behaved in such a way. The higher the cultivation base, the more sensitive they were, and as of this moment, Meng Hao was vastly more powerful than he had been the first time he had come here. After considering it for a moment, Meng Hao decided that it was only natural for the black beetles to be able to sense him despite the fact that he wasn't very close.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao immediately fell into retreat. At the same time, he continuously sealed and suppressed his cultivation base until its aura was similar to the Qi Condensation stage. However, even then, the black beetles didn't stop. In fact, there were more and more, vast amounts that caused Meng Hao's scalp to go numb, and his mind to spin.

"Could it be that they're still holding a grudge?" Shocked, he quickly retreated, but they continued to chase after him, crimson eyes filled with hatred and madness.

"Something's off!" he thought, heart pounding. Based on his previous experiences with them, he was sure that he was far enough away that they shouldn't be continuing to pursue him.

His face flickered as he watched the black beetles getting closer and closer. All of a sudden, he realized that virtually all of the black beetles' eyes were fixed, not on him, but rather... his bag of holding!!

Gaping in shock during this critical moment, he quickly sent his divine sense into his bag of holding. However, everything seemed normal. There was nothing different about it at all. In fact, the black beetle remaining from the group he had captured the first time he was here was covered in sealing marks, and had not awakened.

“Is it because of this thing?” He quickly pulled out the beetle and threw it toward the incoming army, but... they didn’t stop charging toward him.

“Why exactly are they acting like this!?!?” His face fell, and he lifted his right hand, causing his cultivation base to surge. The power of Immortal meridians exploded out toward the black beetles as he directly fought back against them. Booms rang out, and numerous black beetles died. However, the vast majority were merely wounded by his divine abilities, not killed. In fact, it seemed to just make them angrier, causing them to attack him even more frantically. Furthermore, he saw that even more black beetles were flying up, beetles that were similar to the Immortal Realm and the Ancient Realm. His heart skipped a beat.

“No, there’s definitely something in my bag of holding that’s attracting them. But what?!?” Without hesitation, he began to seal all of the objects in his bag of holding, preventing their auras from emanating out. At the same time, he fell backward in retreat. Eventually, he sealed a certain ring, and all of a sudden, the black beetles stopped in mid-flight. Then they flew around for a bit, as if they were searching for something. They looked very irascible.

When he saw this happening, Meng Hao broke into a cold sweat. Eventually, the black beetles flew back to their original position in the medicinal plant garden, where they landed, once again making the ground look as if it were black.

Meng Hao hovered in midair. Not even taking time to wipe the sweat from his brow, he stared at the ring in his bag of holding. That was the ring... he had recently acquired from Yi Fazi!

“Is it this thing? Or something inside of it?” Eyes flickering, he pulled the ring out. He had only given it a cursory examination when he had acquired it. It was actually a ring of holding, and required significantly powerful divine sense to open. Meng Hao was being extra careful due to the fact that he was in the Ruins of Immortality, and had planned to wait until after he had left before opening it up. Now, though, he decided that even if it took significant effort with divine sense, that it was definitely time to open it.

Most of the holding-type treasures that Meng Hao had seen were bags of holding. It was actually his first time seeing a ring exactly like this one. After a moment, he slipped the ring onto his finger and then sent his divine sense into it.

His divine sense instantly went as wild as horse with the reins loose as it was sucked into the ring. After only a moment of trying to open it, Meng Hao felt like he couldn't take it any longer.

"Don't tell me that because this ring is from another world where the natural laws and cultivation systems are different, I have to expend much more divine sense to open it!?" Frowning, he took out some medicinal pills, swallowed them, and then spent another hour working with the ring. Finally, after pouring vast amounts of divine sense into the ring, cracking sounds began to echo out in all directions.

Next, everything inside of the ring of holding became visible to Meng Hao. After only a brief look, his eyes began to shine brightly.

There were many things inside, and at first glance, Meng Hao had no way of knowing which one was causing the black beetles to act so aggressively. At first he thought it might be the medicinal pills inside the ring. Meng Hao saw many types of pills that Yi Fazi had consumed during their chase. One by one, he took the pills out and then looked over at the black beetles in the medicinal plant garden.

Although he didn't know the names of any of the pills, based on his skill in the Dao of alchemy, it only took a whiff for him to understand them. The result was that he was more and more moved.

These medicinal pills were clearly concocted based using a completely different system of alchemy than that which existed in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, which led to quite a bit of thought on Meng Hao's part. After a bit more searching through the ring of holding, he found an incense stick.

"An incense stick? Don't tell me this is what I'm looking for?" The incense stick was surrounded by a five-colored glow, which Meng Hao couldn't identify. However, when he pulled it out of the ring of holding,

there was no reaction at all from the black beetles.

He frowned, and then sniffed the incense stick. He only took one whiff, but in that instant, his Immortal meridians surged as if they had been intensely stimulated. In the blink of an eye, all of the Immortal qi inside of him was sent spinning.

“What kind of incense is this!” he thought. “One whiff caused my cultivation base to erupt....” He scanned himself with divine sense, and could tell that in this very short period of time, his cultivation base... had progressed significantly.

His eyes shone brightly as he looked at the incense stick, which he now realized was a valuable treasure.

“Incense sticks are meant to be burned. I wonder what would happen if burned this one...?” His heart trembled, but now was not the time to perform such an experiment. He carefully put the incense stick back into the ring of holding, looking very satisfied.

“This incense stick is definitely extraordinary,” he murmured. “It must be a precious treasure useful for practicing cultivation.” Next, he looked back into the ring of holding at one of his favorite things in the world, which, in his opinion, were the least likely thing to attract the black beetles.

They were black stones, stones that contained natural law. They looked very much like Immortal jade, each piece emanating a mysterious glow, and an aura of life.

Obviously, this was a type of cultivation resource from Yi Fazi’s home world, something akin to Immortal jade or spirit stones.

Meng Hao had no way to assess their value, but this ring of holding was far, far larger than any of Meng Hao’s bags of holding, leaving plenty of room to collect the stones.

In fact, there were at least 1,000,000 of the black spirit-immortal stones.

Meng Hao took one out to look at it closely, and was even more assured that his previous speculations about them were correct.

However, in almost the same moment that he took out the black spirit-immortal stone, all of a sudden, the land in the medicinal plant garden seemed to explode. Droning sounds filled the air as countless black beetles, even more than before, flew into the air. They turned hungrily toward Meng Hao and then began to fly toward him at top speed.

Meng Hao was so frightened he started trembling. With a final glance at the black spirit-immortal stone, he unhesitatingly sealed it back in the ring of holding, and then retreated at top speed.

The black beetles continued to fly around the area for a few hours before slowly and reluctantly returning to their places in the medicinal plant garden.

“So, that’s what was causing it!!” Heart pounding with fear, he looked at the spirit-immortal stones in the ring of holding, and his eyes began to shine with a strange glow. Finally, he once again began to examine the ring of holding.

There were jade slips, one of which Meng Hao took out and examined, after which his eyes went wide.

“This is....” The jade slip was imprinted with information. In fact, after further examination, he found that all of them were similarly imprinted. Each one was some type of record, almost the type of receipt a mortal would get at a bank. Essentially... they were notes that allowed one to withdraw spirit-immortal stones at pre-specified locations.

Each one of the slips was worth 1,000,000 spirit-immortal stones, and there were fully a hundred or more inside the ring of holding. After getting a basic idea of how much the jade slips were worth, Meng Hao’s eyes went red. All of a sudden, he was extremely interested in the place that Yi Fazi came from.

At the moment, though, he was most interested in the medicinal plant garden.

Looking over at the medicinal plants, he couldn’t help with palpitate with the same eagerness he had the first time he came here.

“When opportunity knocks...!” he thought, rubbing the ring of holding. When he thought about the black stones, his eyes glowed with anticipation. This time, he was prepared to make a killing!

It wouldn't be like the first time, where he only managed to grab a handful of medicinal plants. This time, he would make significant gains, both in terms of medicinal plants, and black beetles!

That was especially true considering that back in the clan on Planet East Victory, Pill Elder had given him the first volume of the Laws of the Dao of Insects. Having studied it a bit already, Meng Hao was confident that he could subjugate some of the black beetles.

“I'm going to subdue over a thousand of them....” he thought, licking his lips. Then he thought about what it would look like if he had a trump card of over a thousand black beetles, charging in attack, and he got even more excited.

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1. The last time Meng Hao was in this area was in chapter 883.

Chapter 1028: Stealing My Business?!?!?

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he slapped his bag of holding to produce the black feather, an item he could use to change his aura or appearance, and which he viewed as a crucial part of his inventory.

However, he was also aware that these black beetles had unique characteristics. The last time he was here, it was only by using the feather and working with the meat jelly that he was able to grab a handful of medicinal plants from the area.

Meng Hao knew that the aura-changing abilities of the feather would only work on the black beetles for a short period of time before becoming ineffective.

"Unless there's some way to continuously distract them, then the effect of the feather can be maximized," he thought, eyes glittering. He had long since noticed that the land mass which held the medicinal plant garden did not remain in a fixed location within the void. Rather, it floated around, almost as if it were not subject to natural law. In truth, there seemed to be some sort of pattern to its movement.

After a long moment of thought, Meng Hao's eyes flickered and he flew into the air. After calculating the trajectory of the medicinal plant garden land mass, he flew out ahead of it. Whenever he came across a stretch of ruins floating within the void, he tossed out a sealed black spirit-immortal stone onto it.

"Based on the speed this medicinal plant garden land mass is moving," he murmured, eyes shining brightly, "it should pass by these sets of ruins in the coming days."

He continued on a bit further, planting about ten spirit-immortal stones in various locations. Then he quickly shot back in the direction of the medicinal plant garden land mass and hid near the location where he had planted the first spirit-immortal stone. There, he waited patiently.

Time passed. Soon, after enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the medicinal plant garden land mass appeared, floating through the

void toward the stretch of ruins Meng Hao was hiding in.

Meng Hao quickly reviewed his plan, then without any further hesitation, performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed at the sealed spirit-immortal stone. The wave of a finger caused the seal on the spirit-immortal stone to be removed, revealing its aura.

In the moment the aura spread out, the medicinal plant garden land mass trembled, and countless black beetles flew up madly into the air. They transformed into a black windstorm of beetles, tens of thousands in number. Eventually, they took on the shape of a huge hand which shot toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling filled the air, along with hissing sounds as the black beetles closed in on Meng Hao. It was at that point that Meng Hao whipped out the feather and activated it.

Instantly, he changed his appearance to no longer look like a cultivator. Instead, he looked like a black beetle, with an aura very similar to theirs.

In that moment, the windstorm-like mass of tens of thousands of black beetles shot into the ruins he had been hiding in. Meng Hao quickly mixed in with the beetles, heart pounding, trying to look just as fierce and vicious as them. He even roared just like they did, trying to imitate them as closely as possible as they began to fight over the spirit-immortal stone.

Moments later, the entire stretch of ruins collapsed under the explosive power of the tens of thousands of black beetles, and was then voraciously consumed.

The cracking sounds that rang out as the beetles chomped up the chunks of stones caused Meng Hao's heart to thump. From his perspective, not even Fatty's teeth could measure up to their mandibles.

As for the spirit-immortal stone, one of the fastest black beetles managed to consume it, whereupon Meng Hao observed as it let out agonized shrieks. Black light rose up from it, circling around as... a vague Ghost Eye became visible.

The other black beetles around it looked over with cold insanity in their

eyes, as if they wished to charge over, tear it to pieces, and eat it up. However, before they could even move, the black beetle with the Ghost Eye looked up and roared. The mere threat of the roar instantly caused the other black beetles to stand down.

Meng Hao looked on with surprise. Then, lost in thought, he went along with the army of black beetles as it flew around a few times and then headed back toward the medicinal plant garden land mass.

He remained cautious as he flew along with the beetles. He would occasionally click his mandibles, occasionally roar, all to make him appear to be exactly like the other black beetles. After returning to the medicinal plant garden land mass, he was careful not to attract the suspicion of any of the other black beetles.

When everything quieted down, he remained calmly on the ground, prone, eyes shifting about. Eventually, he slowly began to sidle his way over to an area behind where most of the black beetles were, where a Sun Blossom was growing. A flash of light could be seen as the Sun Blossom suddenly vanished.

Meng Hao was nervous, but also excited. Afterward, he began to move carefully off in another direction. When he encountered other black beetle, he would click his mandibles and roar, as if reminding the other black beetle that he... was just like them.

Unfortunately, the sound of his roar did not resemble theirs very closely. However, he was an eager study, and constantly imitated them in an effort to sound exactly like they did..

Anyone who knew Meng Hao and could watch this scene play out would definitely be extremely shocked and feel it was unthinkable. However, Meng Hao was getting very excited.

“Rich!” he thought. “I’m gonna be rich!” He crawled along past one black beetle after another, first collecting some Immortality Illumination Vines, and then catching sight of a patch of Divine Spirit Grass. Eyes shining brightly, he crawled over.

It was in this manner that Meng Hao quickly harvested seven or eight

different medicinal plants. The glow in his eyes grew brighter and brighter. At one point, he turned around and noticed a tiny violet tree a few dozen meters away.

“Violet Lightning Tree!” he thought, licking his mandibles. He had just begun to crawl over when, all of a sudden, one of the nearby black beetles looked up coldly at him, as if it were hesitating about something.

Meng Hao froze nervously. He knew that one cry from the black beetle could instantly incite all of the other surrounding black beetles into a frenzy.

In order to prevent them crying out an alarm in such a way, Meng Hao had been pretending to be even more fierce and savage than them. He had taken to roaring at them threateningly, as if he were on the verge of attacking them.

Currently the black beetle in front of him was shaking as if in rage, and its expression became extremely fierce as it looked at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao glared back, taking a few threatening steps forward and roaring.

A long moment later, the black beetle backed down, making room for Meng Hao to pass. Heart pounding, he slowly walked past the beetle, then hurried over to the tiny violet tree. A glow instantly surrounded the tree, and then it vanished.

The disappearance of the tree apparently tipped the scales in some way, so that the black beetles finally noticed that something was going on. The whole land mass trembled as one black beetle after another flew into the air. Looking very agitated, they circled at a low altitude, relentlessly scouring the area.

Meng Hao also flew up into the air, pretending that he was looking for something.

More and more beetles began to fly up into the air, causing Meng Hao's scalp to grow numb. He knew that if the bugs continued to search, they would eventually find him. His heart began to pound when, all of a

sudden, up ahead in the void, he caught sight of one of the locations where he had planted a spirit-immortal stone. Immediately, he unsealed the stone and its aura.

As soon as the aura spread out, rumbling filled the air. The black beetles surrounding Meng Hao went crazy. Eyes crimson, they turned to the world outside the land mass, and charged forward, Meng Hao in tow.

Once again, a set of ruins was destroyed and consumed. Another of the black beetles consumed the spirit-immortal stone, and a Ghost Eye appeared on its back. Then, all the beetles returned to the land mass. Meng Hao once again began to scurry about, collecting medicinal plants.

Any time the black beetles detected him, Meng Hao would unseal one of the spirit-immortal stones. It was in this manner that several days passed. Meng Hao had gotten quite familiar with the routine, and had already harvested more than seventy types of medicinal plants.

Also, after having practiced his roar on numerous occasions, it was now almost exactly the same as the black beetles’.

“I’ve struck the jackpot this time!” he thought excitedly as he crawled toward a Turtle Spirit Flower. Suddenly, all of the black beetles around him suddenly began to stir in agitation, and even roar. They also began to lift their heads and look off into the sky, their eyes cold.

Meng Hao stared in shock, and without even thinking about it, joined the beetles in their roaring. As soon as he saw what they were looking at, his eyes went wide with shock. Far off in the distance, the previously placid void was now disturbed by ripples.

The ripples spread out like waves on the surface of a pond, and in the middle of them all could be seen a figure, shooting effortlessly through the void, as if... merely walking!

It was a woman wearing a long, pink gown. Her features were beautiful, and although she didn’t appear to be very old, there was a slight ancient air to her. She held a lantern in her hand, which shed light all around her as she walked forward.

She seemed to be a very cautious sort, and as soon as she arrived she looked around to make sure nothing was too suspicious in the area before relaxing a bit.

Almost as soon as the woman appeared, the black beetles, along with Meng Hao, roared and flew toward her aggressively.

However, as soon as the black beetles got close, she lifted her lantern high above her head and then opened its side to reveal the candle holder within. Resting on top of the candle holder was a tiny white branch, currently burning and letting off flickering firelight. The woman didn't pause for a moment; she quickly sliced open the tip of her finger and splashed a drop of blood onto the flame.

When the blood hit the flame, it turned into a cloud of smoke which spread out toward the incoming black beetles. In the blink of an eye, the smoke had surrounded all of them, including Meng Hao.

Instantly, the beetles around Meng Hao stopped in place, seemingly in a stupor. Meng Hao gaped in shock until he realized that the smoke apparently had no affect on him whatsoever.

Although it had spread out very quickly, the light quickly began to die down. After a moment of calculation, Meng Hao was sure that it would only last for the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

The next thing he saw was the pink-robed young woman looking very pleased with herself as she sped down toward the land mass below. She landed on the ground, sending smoke billowing out wherever she went and causing the beetles that flew up to fall into a coma. She proceeded along carefully and began to harvest medicinal plants.

"Stealing my business?" thought Meng Hao and was instantly enraged. One of the things he hated most in life was when people stole business from him. Earlier, he had been scared out of his mind to harvest medicinal plants in this area. He had used more than ten spirit-immortal stones, and even spent several days pretending to be a bug, and in the end his effort had allowed him to pick about seventy medicinal plants. However, this young woman only used a lantern and was able to harvest ten plants in

one shot! That was something Meng Hao just couldn't accept.

"I hate cheaters! This wench is a cheater!" Enraged, Meng Hao gritted his teeth as he watched the young woman quickly harvest medicinal plants. Finally, he shot forward; the smoke that had been used to put the black beetles into a trance had absolutely no effect on him.

The instant he flew into motion, the young woman turned toward him and gaped in shock.

As she looked over, Meng Hao performed the best possible black beetle roar that he could imitate, a roar that was... remarkably true to life.

Chapter 1029: You're the Insect Demon!

Almost in the same instant that Meng Hao's roar echoed out... because of its incredible similarity to the actual call of the black beetles, the dazed black beetles in the smoke suddenly awakened and began to join him in roaring.

"Curses!" thought the young woman, her facial expression flickering. "How come one of them wasn't affected!?!?" Glaring at Meng Hao, she backed up, then performed an incantation gesture with her right hand. Not only did she crush the tiny white tree in the lantern, she also bit her tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood.

At the same time, Meng Hao's roar was causing more and more of the black beetles to awaken. They began to fly out of the smoke, radiating savagery and murderous auras as they charged toward the young woman.

Even Meng Hao had never imagined that he would be able to awaken the black beetles in this way. There were even some of them who appeared to approve of him, and began to fly in circles around him, as if indicating that they wished to follow his lead.

Because of this, Meng Hao now stood out quite a bit among the sea of insects. In fact, he almost looked like... one of their bosses.

Meng Hao's heart was thumping, but he felt quite pleased with himself. As for the young woman, he wasn't worried that she would be in any danger. After all, this was the Ruins of Immortality. The way that she had stepped out from the ripples the way she did left Meng Hao with the impression that she was in the early Ancient Realm. Presumably, she would have her own methods of getting away if necessary.

He had no plans to kill her; his only goal had been to scare her away, and prevent her from stealing away his business.

At the moment, it seemed that his plan had succeeded. The black beetles were swarming toward the young woman from all directions. However, it was then that the white branch the young woman had crushed transformed into white smoke. After absorbing the young woman's blood,

it spread out around her like a shield.

Even as the black beetles closed in on her, the white smoke spread out, and the woman vanished. However... as the smoke dissipated, something else became visible... a black beetle!!

Much attention to detail had been paid in the materialization of this black beetle. In terms of both physical appearance and aura, it looked exactly like the real black beetles!

In fact, it was hard to tell whether or not it was a materialization, or real!

Meng Hao stared in shock.

The incoming army of beetles also gaped in astonishment. However, considering that they weren't very intelligent, they had no way to understand what had happened. Meng Hao watched, furious, as the young woman in black beetle-form quickly became part of the army of insects.

Soon, everything calmed down, and Meng Hao continued to glare over at the young woman as she carefully crawled around on the ground looking for medicinal plants.

"What a disgrace!" he fumed inwardly. "She's obviously a cultivator! And yet she abandons all dignity to turn into a bug and look for some worthless medicinal plants! Is that the kind of thing a cultivator does!?!?" He truly felt that this young woman was completely shameless.

Despite what he was thinking, Meng Hao continued to do exactly what he had done before, crawling among the sea of insects to the nearest medicinal plant and quickly harvesting it.

However, as he crawled along, he suddenly realized that he was being followed. Behind him were a few of the beetles who had started following him after he had woken them up.

That made Meng Hao stick out even more than before. Now he had a small entourage of beetles that looked almost like Imperial guards. Actually, they made it much easier to harvest medicinal plants.

At this point, there was quite a bit of distance between Meng Hao and

the young woman. Not only were they not interfering with each other's efforts, but the young woman wouldn't be able to find out for quite some time she had a competitor among the sea of insects.

Meng Hao, though, was as angry as before, and furiously harvested the medicinal plants with increasing speed. Even though Meng Hao believed her to be stealing his business, for the sake of being able to stay there longer, he could potentially have accepted the situation if she had refrained from interfering with him.

However, the young woman's methods were somewhat heavy-handed, leading to several occasions in which the black beetles were stirred up. That, of course, affected Meng Hao.

As more time passed, the black beetles were aroused more and more often. There were even some situations in which Meng Hao almost found himself in danger. In fact, with every outburst among the black beetles, some of the beetles would then start to patrol the area, forcing Meng Hao to stop his work.

The increasing severity of these interruptions didn't seem to bother the young woman at all.

However, Meng Hao was getting to the point where he couldn't take it any more. He waited until the black beetles calmed down, then turned and sped toward the area where the young woman was working.

Gradually the two of them neared each other, and eventually, both of their eyes came to fall on the same patch of Divine Spirit Grass, and they rushed toward it simultaneously.

Finally, the young woman sensed that something strange was going on. She looked at Meng Hao, and instantly recognized him as the black beetle that had discovered her presence earlier.

The moment she laid eyes on him, she clenched her teeth, then let out a threatening roar. Meng Hao's black beetle followers immediately roared back and looked fiercely at the young woman.

Feeling he had no other choice, Meng Hao got a bit closer, and then

transmitted: “Is there any way you could possibly be a BIT more careful when harvesting the medicinal plants? Maybe NOT cause such a reaction from the beetles!?”

As soon as she heard his words, the young woman looked at him, shock and disbelief evident even in beetle-form.

“Y-y-you’re... you’re an Insect Demon!” she said hoarsely, looking aghast. “An actual Insect Demon!!” Her initial reaction was not to assume that Meng Hao was a cultivator like herself, but rather, that he was an insect that had transformed into a Demon.

Of course, it wouldn’t be proper to blame her for having this reaction. In truth, Meng Hao’s disguise was simply too effective. From her perspective, he really was one of the black beetles. Her own ability to transform into a black beetle came from a naturally developed power of her own. It was something that, in all of the Nine Mountains and Seas, only bloodline members of her clan could do.

Other divine abilities of transformation could not possibly deceive the black beetles. She had never seen anyone do anything like what Meng Hao was doing, remaining undercover within the sea of insects. Furthermore, based on his appearance, and the fact that he had an entourage of guards, it made it so that there was no way she would ever think that he was a cultivator.

In her opinion, any cultivator who could possibly entrench himself among the black beetles, and even achieve a position as a boss, well that type of cultivator... would be simply too Heaven-defying.

“YOU’RE the Insect Demon!” retorted Meng Hao angrily, glaring at the young woman. “Everyone in your whole family is an Insect Demon!!

“Listen, I got here first, so if you want to harvest medicinal plants, fine, but at least do it a bit more carefully! Stop stirring up all the bugs! Doing that isn’t helpful for either of us!” Meng Hao clenched his jaw in helplessness. The young woman was capable of harvesting the plants, and obviously wasn’t going to leave. Plus, if they started fighting, then it would be impossible for him to continue to do his own harvesting.

The young woman stared back at him in shock. After looking closely at Meng Hao for a moment, she finally was starting to be convinced that this black beetle boss was actually a cultivator like herself.

To her, it was almost impossible to believe.

“You’re really a cultivator?” she asked. Inwardly, she breathed a sigh of relief. Actually, meeting a cultivator here was a lot better than meeting an insect who had transformed into a Demon. At this point, her eyes began to glow with coldness.

“Well, it doesn’t matter if you’re an Insect Demon or a cultivator, or whether you got here first or not,” she said coldly. “All of these medicinal plants belong to me. Leave immediately! If you dare to fight with me over them, then even if you are an Insect Demon, I’ll turn you into a squashed insect! And if you’re actually a cultivator, then I’ll turn you into a corpse!

“And as for me stirring up the insects, well that’s my business! It has nothing to do with you. Now, get the hell out of this place!” Killing intent flickered in the young woman’s eyes as she promptly ignored Meng Hao and then closed in on the same medicinal plant that they had both been heading for to begin with.

“What a blockhead!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes shining with a cold light as he too sped toward the same medicinal plant. In the blink of an eye, the two of them reached the plant. It was at this point that the young woman suddenly flashed, transforming into three separate beetles!

She rushed forward at top speed to snatch the medicinal plant. However, Meng Hao was very familiar with how to harvest medicinal plants, and despite the fact that there were three of her, she was simply too slow. In a flash of light, he quickly harvested the plant.

“Are you looking to die!?” she cursed, her eyes glittering with killing intent. She suddenly spit out a blob of smoke which rapidly spread out to cover the area around them, including Meng Hao.

At the same time, the aura-changing transformation of the black feather was sent into chaos because of the smoke.

As soon as the aura was disrupted, the surrounding black beetles buzzed into action. Even the few that had been following Meng Hao before suddenly turned ferocious, and flew straight toward him.

Meng Hao's face fell. He had never imagined that the young woman would use tactics like this. Now that he clearly had the aura of a cultivator, and could no longer conceal himself, Meng Hao had no choice but to fly away.

As he did, the ground began to quake as tens of thousands of black beetles flew up, stared dead at him, and then charged toward him, causing a droning sound to fill the air.

The young woman in beetle-form backed up quickly, her eyes gleaming with a pleased look. Inwardly, she was laughing coldly.

Meng Hao eyed the young woman coldly. The properties of the smoke just now had left him shocked; it clearly had the ability to dissolve the effects of his transformation.

"So," he thought, "it was because you already had a magical technique that could interfere with my transformation that you attacked so decisively. You really want to kick me out of this place, huh...?"

"Well, then. Let's just see who can kick the other person out first!" Laughing coldly as the black beetles closed in on him, Meng Hao made a grasping motion. Instantly, a spirit-immortal stone flew out of his ring of holding, which he then tossed in the young woman's direction.

As the black stone whistled through the air toward her, the young woman stared in shock. A moment later, it landed right in front of her.

At the same time that the spirit-immortal stone appeared, its aura surged out, sending the black beetles into a mad frenzy. Rumbling filled the air as the beetles that had been chasing Meng Hao roared viciously, then changed directions. There were also many other black beetles from other locations on the land mass that began to charge toward the spirit-immortal stone, eyes bright red.

The young woman's face fell. She could never have predicted that Meng

Hao would be able to use a tactic like this to turn the tables on her. Although her aura was not something that would stir up the beetles, because of the black stone in front of her, she was now the center of a huge maelstrom.

“What kind of stone is that!?” she thought. “It’s driving the Ghost Eye Beetles crazy! Well, it must be some kind of treasure, which means he can’t have very many of them. At the most, he might have a handful. All I have to do is evade these crazy beetles for a bit, and wait until he goes broke!” The young woman clenched her teeth, backed up, and spit out another glob of smoke, which then surrounded her.

Chapter 1030: Su Yan!

It was true that the spirit-immortal stones were treasures, and that he didn't have an endless supply. He only had... about a million of them.

As soon as the beetle-form young woman spit out the mist and backed up to avoid the incoming beetles, Meng Hao laughed coldly. As he hovered in midair, he waved his right hand, sending two more spirit-immortal stones flying out in the young woman's direction, cutting off her path of escape. As soon as the spirit-immortal stones appeared, the black beetles went crazy.

Massive amounts of beetles flew up into the air, at least 40-50,000 of them. They filled the sky and covered the land as they shot toward the young woman.

Her eyes went wide as she saw the mass of frenzied insects. By now, she was thoroughly convinced that these treasures had to be extremely rare, so, gritting her teeth, she once again fell into retreat. In her attempts to evade the black beetles, she was even forced to use greater teleportation.

"I just can't believe that he has many more of those things!" she thought to herself, taking a deep breath. Although she began to laugh coldly, she was actually quite shocked by the black stones.

Next, Meng Hao began to throw out more spirit-immortal stones. This time, he threw out five. As they fell, the young woman's body flickered with light as she just barely managed to escape.

The land shook as vast amounts of black beetles flew up in all directions and then charged in the young woman's direction.

Although her heart was pounding, the young woman looked over at Meng Hao, a cold smile twisting her lips.

"How many more could you possibly have?!"

Meng Hao answered by tossing out ten more spirit-immortal stones, instantly putting the young woman in a very bad position. However, she remained convinced that Meng Hao couldn't possibly have many of the

stones left.

“Just wait until you run out of those things. With all these bugs around, you’ll be the one to meet a dismal fate!” Gritting her teeth, the young woman continued to tell herself that all she had to do was hold on a bit longer, and then she would win. After all, she could easily conceal her aura from the beetles, whereas Meng Hao would be incapable of doing so.

Because of that, she was certain that all she had to do was endure the commotion caused by the spirit-immortal stones, and she could secure victory.

“He’s going to run out soon! He definitely doesn’t have more than a few dozen left!” She clenched her jaw as she constantly was forced to evade the crazed beetles. However, because of the sheer number of bugs in the area, she was soon completely bedraggled.

Meng Hao hovered in midair, the area around him completely devoid of black beetles. He looked down at the shocking amount of bugs down below, and the teleporting young woman, and then waved his hand, causing five more stones to fly out. Then five more. And another five....

Over the space of only a few breaths of time, Meng Hao threw out more than 40 spirit-immortal stones. Each one incited a virtual riot among the black beetles, and caused the young woman’s face to fall even more.

“Impossible! How could he still have more!?” The young woman anxiously evaded the bugs; to her, the spirit-immortal stones were exactly like weapons, shooting toward her across the lands. She had actually considered trying to grab them and put them in her bag of holding, but the crazed looks of the black beetles caused her to hesitate. She was worried that if she grabbed one, the beetles might very well rip her to shreds.

All she could do was evade. As for Meng Hao, though, as he continued to throw out the spirit-immortal stones, he was essentially controlling the black beetles, forcing them to chase down the young woman with deadly intent.

“Dammit! Dammit!!” she thought, terrified and beginning to feel regret that she had so rashly tried to drive Meng Hao away. If they had

cooperated, then she wouldn't be in any danger whatsoever.

Time passed.... 10 more stones. 20. 30. 40.... Blood oozed out of the young woman's mouth as she continuously evaded the black beetles. By now, she was glaring up angrily at Meng Hao as he continued to chuck spirit-immortal stones at her. His supply seemed endless, to the point where her confidence was beginning to waver.

"Just how many of those stones does he have!?!?" As she watched the seemingly endless amount of spirit-immortal stones being thrown at her, her scalp gradually began to grow numb. That was especially true when the available places to teleport to in escape grew fewer and fewer. Soon, her eyes began to widen with disbelief and astonishment.

"Impossible!!!" she cried hoarsely. She almost didn't dare to believe what she was seeing, which was 300 spirit-immortal stones flying through the air toward her like arrows.

"I've got plenty of these spirit stones!" Meng Hao cried out, sounding very overbearing. Inwardly, he was quite proud that he was so rich as to be able to use spirit-immortal stones to smash his opponent. It was a very domineering feeling.

Although it had been a bit impulsive to throw out more than 300 of the stones, the current volley filled the sky as they shot toward the young woman. As a result, the ground shook, and innumerable black beetles flew out. There were some who were similar to the Immortal Realm or the Ancient Realm. Terrifying ripples spread out in all directions as more than 100,000 beetles filled the sky!!

The young woman was terrified and shocked. Never in her wildest imaginings could she have envisioned an object which would provoke this kind of reaction from the Ghost Eye Beetles, nor a situation in which Meng Hao... would have so many of them!!

Hundreds of spirit-immortal stones spun through the air. 100,000 black beetles were in a complete frenzy, roaring, their eyes bright red. They even fought amongst themselves as they charged toward the young woman, who was now certain that she was about to be ripped to pieces by the

shocking onslaught.

But then she clenched her jaw tight, and her eyes shone with determination. As the black beetles bore down on her, she was suddenly surrounded by mist. In the blink of an eye, she transformed from being a black beetle into a cultivator. Then, she waved her hand toward the lands beneath her, launching a violent attack.

It was hard to say what divine ability she used to attack, but it caused an enormous tree to materialize beneath her.

It was fully 3,000 meters tall and conical, with the tip being located at the very bottom. As she waved her palm down, the tree began to descend. In the blink of an eye, it slammed into the land below like a gigantic nail, piercing down into the ground.

Massive rumbling could be heard as the gigantic nail-like tree sank down into the ground.

Next, a piercing howl could be heard coming from down below, as everything seemed to collapse. Countless medicinal plants were destroyed as the roar echoed out, shaking everything in the vicinity within the Ruins of Immortality.

Meng Hao's scalp went numb as he saw the lands below transform into a gargantuan black beetle. Apparently, the nail-like tree had stabbed directly into its body, causing to emit an ear-piercing howl.

Without the slightest hesitation, Meng Hao flew high up into the starry sky. As for the 100,000 black beetles, the howl seemed to drive them to their senses. They all turned, ignoring the young woman and flying directly toward the huge nail-like tree.

The pink-robed young woman's face was ashen, and she was gasping for breath as she chose to do just what Meng Hao had done: fly away.

Two beams of light shot away off into the distance as the enraged howl echoed out. The intensity of the roar as it pierced into Meng Hao's ears actually injured him. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his cultivation base began to tremble wildly, forcing him to stabilize it.

The young woman staggered a bit, blood spraying from her mouth. Her eyes were filled with terror as she looked back at the medicinal plant garden land mass and muttered something.

As for what exactly she had muttered, Meng Hao couldn't hear.

His heart was pounding as he sped along. The young woman, aware that she had provoked a disaster, also sped along, face pale.

The sound of the howl echoed about, causing innumerable ripples to spread out. The land shook, and cracking sounds could be heard. Huge fissures spread out in all directions, each one of them hundreds of meters wide, filled with mysterious, glowing light.

There were also wisps of mist that rose up from the fissures, as well as frost that spread out across the ground.

At the same time, a droning sound could be heard, which grew stronger and more intense by the moment. Within a few breaths of time, innumerable black beetles flew up out of the fissures, turning the army of 100,000 beetles into an army of hundreds of thousands.

They seemed to blot out the sky above. They flew out, roaring, transforming into a sea of insects that resembled a gigantic, pitch-black hand that shot toward Meng Hao and the young woman.

From the look of things... the beetles wouldn't stop until the two of them were dead.

When Meng Hao saw the vast amounts of black beetles flying out of the fissures, his scalp went numb.

"This is all your fault!" he yelled angrily. "I was just harvesting some plants! Why'd you have to try to hog everything! If you hadn't, they wouldn't be chasing us right now!"

"This is just what I wanted!" she replied, sounding a bit sarcastic. "What are you gonna do about it? I want the Ghost Eye Beetles to chase me, if you've got a problem with that, then go tell them about it!"

Meng Hao was extremely angry. As far as he was concerned, this young

woman was being completely unreasonable. He snorted coldly as golden light flickered around him. His Immortal meridians exploded with power, 123 of them, emanating one hundred percent of their possible Immortal power as he transformed into a golden roc. Flapping his wings, he picked up speed, shooting off into the distance.

The young woman also used some unknown technique that caused her to blur as she increased her speed.

The two of them whistled through the air. Although they were no longer on the medicinal plant garden land mass, the black beetles were still chasing them madly. Not only were the beetles not slowing down, more and more joined their numbers.

A sea of insects like this, a tide of beasts, was something that would cause any cultivator who saw it to be shocked to the extreme.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao and the young woman sped onward. The black beetles seemed to have no plans to let them go, and continued to give chase, their roars echoing out in all directions.

Meng Hao gritted his teeth and changed directions. When that happened, the sea of insects split, with one group following him and the other following the pink-garbed young woman.

However, as soon as Meng Hao changed directions, the young woman's eyes flickered. Her body blurred even more, becoming nearly transparent. Suddenly, the beetles behind her seemed to lose track of her aura, then changed directions and buzzed through the air toward Meng Hao.

"You wanna fight with me? You're too inexperienced! From the moment I, Su Yan, awoke on the Eighth Mountain, no one's ever gotten the better of me! Now that I'm passing through the Ninth Mountain, there's no way I'll break my record!" She looked extremely pleased with herself as the hundreds of thousands of black beetles chased Meng Hao. Eyes flickering, she chose not to depart, but to follow along. 1

"Once he's on the verge of defeat, if I threaten him a bit more, he'll definitely hand over the medicinal plants he harvested earlier, to save his life. Plus those black stones. I can definitely extort those out of him!" Su

Yan smiled resplendently. She was actually very beautiful, which was accentuated when she smiled. However, there was also a bit of crafty intelligence to her.

That was especially the case because of the beauty mark next to her mouth, which made her even more entrancing.

*

1. Su Yan's name in Chinese is 苏焉 sū yān. Su is a surname which means "awaken" or "revive." Yan means "beautiful" or "captivating." Interestingly, the character "su" is also used when she says the word "awoke," making for an interesting character contrast/combination in that passage.

Chapter 1031: Trying to Control the Black Beetles

It was as Meng Hao sped away in flight that he saw Su Yan become transparent; the black beetles ignored her and began to turn their attention to him.

Su Yan wasn't completely invisible; her outline was still vaguely apparent. However, she didn't use this opportunity to flee. Instead, she followed the sea of insects, smiling. The expression on her face was something very familiar to Meng Hao.

"Profiting from my misfortune!" Meng Hao's heart went black with hatred. That was one of HIS favorite things to do, but now, the roles were reversed. He was now the subject of the machinations of others, which was something he simply couldn't accept.

"This wench is just waiting until I get tired from being chased. Then she'll try to extort things from me! She must have her eyes on my spirit-immortal stones!" When he realized this, he snorted coldly.

"Spirit-immortal stones are essentially the same as spirit stones!" he thought, grinding his teeth. For someone to try to rob his money was equivalent to targeting his life, and Meng Hao's eyes were instantly shot with blood.

As he fled, a sea of hundreds of thousands of insects whistled through the air behind him. From the look of it, they would die before giving up, and if he slowed down even the least bit, they would rip him to shreds and devour him.

That was especially true of the black beetles who were similar to the Immortal Realm or higher. They were incredibly fast and powerful, and were causing Meng Hao's head to ache. Even more nerve-racking were the Ancient Realm black beetles.

"So, you want to profit from my misfortune huh...? Well, we'll just have to wait and see who wins in the end!" Eyes flickering coldly, he lifted his

right hand, within which appeared a spirit-immortal stone.

As soon as the stone appeared, the black beetles behind him surged forward, roaring, their speed increasing slightly.

A strange light began to shine in Meng Hao's eyes as he lifted his left hand and performed an incantation gesture. Gradually, magical symbols began to appear, which began to cluster around his left hand. In the end, they completely sealed the spirit-immortal stone.

When that happened, the spirit-immortal stone flickered in an odd way.

Su Yan was still trailing behind the sea of insects, and when she saw this happening she gaped in shock. Inwardly, she began to grow wary, and slowed down a bit in her flight.

She had long since come to view the spirit-immortal stones as something very strange, and considering that she didn't know what Meng Hao was doing, it immediately put her on guard.

During the space of a few breaths of time, mysterious light began to shine up from Meng Hao's left hand. At the same time, the spirit-immortal stone began to vibrate, and the magical symbols on its surface flickered with light.

"Demon Sealing, Sixth Hex!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered with bright light. Then, he squeezed his hand down hard onto the spirit-immortal stone, causing brilliant beams of light to shoot out.

Shockingly, he had imbued the spirit-immortal stone with the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, Life Death Hexing.

His expression that of determination, he flung the spirit-immortal stone out, causing it to transform into a beam of light that shot into the sea of insects.

It was just as if he were fishing. Fishing for black beetles!

Whichever black beetle got the spirit-immortal stone would be consuming Meng Hao's Life Death Hex. Although the likelihood of success was not large, if he kept trying for long enough, he would surely

succeed eventually.

Light flashed as the spirit-immortal stone appeared in the middle of the sea of insects. In virtually the blink of an eye, countless black beetles pounced on it, going wild in their struggles to acquire it. Soon, a rather large beetle managed to swallow it down, right in front of its countless compatriots, who glared at it covetously.

It didn't take very long for the black beetle who had swallowed the spirit-immortal stone to begin to tremble. After a breath of time passed, a boom could be heard as it exploded into pieces.

The sight of it caused the Su Yan's face to flicker.

Meng Hao frowned. However, he knew that the Life Death Hex's success rate was low, and would probably be even lower since he was using it with spirit-immortal stones as bait. However, he wasn't discouraged, and continued to make further attempts. As he fled, he threw out more and more spirit-immortal stones. Every time, a black beetle would consume it, then explode.

However, the black beetles were as crazy as ever. Despite the possibility of dying, they still wanted to eat the spirit-immortal stones.

The pink-robed Su Yan continued to follow, watching with wide eyes and gaping mouth as Meng Hao used the bizarre, wondrous black stones.

About two hours passed. Then, one particular beetle chomped up one of the spirit-immortal stones that Meng Hao tossed out, and instead of exploding, its body began to shine with brilliant light and magical symbols. Finally, one particular magical symbol appeared which shot out toward Meng Hao, then merged into him, causing his face to light up with joy.

In that instant, a tiny, illusory black beetle appeared in his mind. He knew that with a single thought, he could cause that black beetle to die.

"It worked!" he thought, licking his lips. He only had the first volume of the Laws of the Dao of Insects, which was basically an introduction on how to raise Spirit Insects. Meng Hao was already confident in the use of

those methods. However, although he had looked into how to control the insects, when it came to a comprehensive understanding of the Dao of Insects, he was quite lacking.

In the end, though, that didn't really matter; he didn't need to study the control techniques. Since he had the Life Death Hex, he could essentially control them perfectly.

Now that he had succeeded, he was much more confident. He was no longer anxious to flee, but instead allowed the sea of insects to get close to him, and continuously threw out spirit-immortal stones.

When Su Yan saw this, her heart filled with amazement. Although she couldn't see any signs which would lead her to the conclusion that Meng Hao could control the black beetles, she was still getting a very bad premonition. She was even starting to feel that if she didn't take the chance to flee right now, she might find herself in serious danger.

"Just what kind of stones are those? They're so bizarre!!" She almost convinced herself to flee, but couldn't quite make herself do it. Gritting her teeth, she continued to follow, making sure she was fully on guard, even more so than before.

Time passed. Several days later, Meng Hao had already tossed out more than 30,000 spirit-immortal stones. By this point, he now had control of about 300 black beetles. He didn't summon them to his side, but allowed them to remain among the sea of insects.

However, the rest of the 30,000 insects that consumed his spirit-immortal stones all died, without a single exception.

Gradually, the number of black beetles he controlled increased from 300 to 400. And then to 500....

Of course, the number of black beetles that died also increased, to a total of more than 50,000. Finally, a rumbling cry rang out from the direction of the medicinal plant garden land mass, something that sounded almost like a summons.

Moments before....

Having seen everything that she had over the past few days, Su Yan was completely shaken. She was even wondering whether or not Meng Hao might actually kill all of the black beetles.

“What kind of inhuman creature is he!?” she thought, heart pounding. She was really starting to worry that if she kept up the chase, something bad might happen to her in the end.

From the moment she had awoken until now, she had never met a cultivator like Meng Hao, someone who seemed so mysterious and unfathomable that it filled her with dread.

Just in the moment when she finally decided to leave, a roar suddenly arose from all of the black beetles, and they stopped in place.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Based on his connection with the 500 black beetles he had control of, he could feel that they were being summoned back by the gargantuan king of black beetles that existed beneath the medicinal plant garden land mass.

It took only a moment for the insects to stop pursuing Meng Hao and retreat back to where they came from. Apparently, the death of the 50,000 black beetles caused their king to give up on the idea of killing Meng Hao.

Almost in the same moment that the sea of insects stopped pursuing Meng Hao, Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly. He suddenly extended his right hand and began tossing out one spirit-immortal stone after another.

The black beetles were now hesitating. On the one hand, they had the enticement of the spirit-immortal stones. On the other hand, they had the call of the beetle king. A buzzing sound filled the air as the sea of insects ripped into two parts, one of which followed the summons, the other of which, composed of tens of thousands of black beetles, charged madly after the spirit-immortal stones.

Su Yan's face flickered. She had never imagined that Meng Hao would intentionally provoke the sea of insects.

However, after a relatively short period of time, the black beetles simply

couldn't resist the repeated calls of the beetle king. Meng Hao was only able to get control of a few dozen more beetles before they turned and headed back to the land mass.

When that happened, Su Yan hesitated for a moment, then gritted her teeth and turned to leave. She got a very strange feeling after having seen everything that Meng Hao had done. In addition, she had an even more intense premonition that something bad was about to happen.

At the same time that the black beetles turned to leave, Meng Hao suddenly called out: "Come!"

More than 500 black beetles stopped in place, then returned to fly around Meng Hao. All of the beetles had Ghost Eyes on their backs, making them look especially vicious.

Su Yan, who was already some distance away, looked on with shock, and her mind spun. Earlier, she had felt as if something strange were going on, but she had never thought that Meng Hao would actually be able to control the black beetles. Heart pounding, she quickly did her best to escape unnoticed.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly. He had endured deadly pursuit for days, all the while being followed by the pink-robed young woman, who he knew was just waiting to take advantage of him. How could he possibly let her get away so easily now?

"My turn to be the bandit!" He waved his right hand, using the Life Death Hex to cause more than 500 vicious beetles to suddenly fly directly toward Su Yan.

Meng Hao himself descended to sit cross-legged on the back of one of the black beetles, from which position he stared coldly at the fleeing Su Yan. She was moving quickly, but the black beetles were by no means slow. 500 of them shot through the void, and from a distance, it almost looked like 500 Ghost Eyes, radiating mysterious light and sinister auras.

"How could this be happening!?" thought Su Yan, her mind reeling. "He... he can actually control the Ghost Eye Beetles!!

“According to the legends, these beetles are very difficult to bond. The only way to do so is to personally raise them from larvae, and even then, you have to utilize special methods to have the slightest chance at success!

“In this age, though, the methods for raising them have long since been lost! And yet... he’s actually controlling them!! Most important of all, what he’s controlling are not larvae, but full-grown insects!” Su Yan almost couldn’t think straight, and her face flickered with intense fear of Meng Hao.

What she feared was not his cultivation base; she could tell that he was merely in the Immortal Realm. What she feared were his 500 black beetles!

Chapter 1032: Chasing Down Su Yan!

Now the tables were completely turned. Su Yan fled, and Meng Hao chased her. 500 black beetles soared through the Ruins of Immortality like a black windstorm. All of them were at least a half a meter long or so, and a few of the largest were more than three meters long.

500 black beetles made a small-scale sea of insects. Although you couldn't say that they blotted out the sky, they did cause everything to shake, and sent endless ripples out as they chased after Su Yan.

If it were just a matter of black beetles, Su Yan would have numerous ways of dealing with them and escaping. However... she wasn't just being chased by black beetles; she was being chased by Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on one of the larger beetles, eyes flickering coldly. His gaze only continued to get colder as he looked at Su Yan. After all, she was the one who had ruined his plan to harvest medicinal plants.

Not only did she attempt to steal his business, but she ended up making it impossible for him to even harvest the medicinal plants at all. Then she used the pursuit of the black beetles as a tool to try to kill him. Most unforgivable was that she had planned to take advantage of his misfortune to extort his wealth.

It had been a long time since Meng Hao had been victim of such plotting. Not even that old fox Fang Shoudao aggravated him as much as this. Some people might prefer to treat women with extra tenderness, but Meng Hao completely ignored that. With a cold harrumph, he extended his right hand and waved his finger toward Su Yan.

It was none other than the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

Even as Su Yan shot forward anxiously, she suddenly trembled. Her cultivation base completely stopped moving, and she screeched to a halt in midair.

Next, Meng Hao's Immortal meridians exploded with power, and his cultivation base surged. 123 Blood Demon heads appeared, roaring as they

charged toward Su Yan.

Su Yan's eyes widened, and she bit down hard on the tip of her tongue. Pain flooded through her along with cracking sounds as she broke free from Meng Hao's Hexing magic. Then she turned, eyes flickering with fear, but more so, coldness.

Instead of trying to evade the 123 Blood Demon heads, she breathed in deeply, absorbing the power of Heaven and Earth. Then she lifted her right foot up and stamped it down violently, striding in Meng Hao's direction.

That first step caused the void to tremble. Her second step caused everything in the area to shake. The third step caused fissures to crack the ground for 3,000 meters in every direction.

Meng Hao's eyes widened with shock at the sight of this pink-robed young woman's divine ability. She took only three steps, but those three steps caused her energy to surge. Meng Hao's mind was sent reeling. Each of the steps seemed to trample upon his inner thoughts, causing his cultivation base to be thrown into chaos, and the flame of his life force to flicker.

Next, it was with a completely icy face that Su Yan took a fourth step. Rumbling echoed out everywhere!

When she took her fifth step, the entire world seemed to be turning inside out. Howling sounds could be heard in all directions. It was almost as if this area were turning into a different world altogether.

Her sixth step caused the crashing sound of thunder to fill the area for thousands of meters in each direction, along with an archaic, ancient aura.

Meng Hao's magical Blood Demon heads all trembled, and were smashed to pieces by the surging energy.

It was in that moment that Su Yan took her seventh step!

"Seven Steps of the Hellgod!" Su Yan cried out the words as she took the seventh step. The void shattered, and massive roaring sounds could be heard. A huge foot appeared up above, emanating shocking energy. A boundless feeling of savagery buffeted Meng Hao as the foot stamped

down toward him.

The starry sky vibrated as Meng Hao looked up, eyes wide. Then, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and pointed toward the huge foot.

“Paragon Bridge!” He let out a muffled growl as his 123 Immortal meridians, as well as his 33 Heavens, formed into the Paragon Bridge, which shot toward the foot.

A huge boom could be heard as the bridge and the foot collided. In that instant, the void around them seemed to be torn asunder. Boundless echoes rang out as the savage foot shattered, layer by layer, transforming into innumerable motes of light that then faded away.

The Paragon Bridge also trembled and collapsed into pieces.

Meng Hao trembled, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. The pink-robed Su Yan’s face was ashen, and blood also oozed out her mouth as she looked at Meng Hao in shock.

She was in the Ancient Realm, and not an ordinary Ancient Realm cultivator at that. She had her own Dao; analogous to a true Immortal relative to the Immortal Realm, she was a Chosen of the Ancient Realm. Despite having only extinguished one Soul Lamp, she was by no means weak.

In her view, Meng Hao was only in the Immortal Realm, and even if he was at the peak of the Realm, he was still much weaker than her.

Before, she had merely feared his black beetles, and his mysterious, unfathomable spirit-immortal stones. Therefore, she attacked him, hoping to at least injure him, and thus be able to escape the black beetles.

However... in their first true interchange, she found that the two of them were relatively evenly matched. That filled Su Yan with fear, and she instantly fell back into retreat.

Meng Hao remained seated on the black beetle, eyes shining with a strange light at the fleeing Su Yan. Inwardly, his heart was pounding with anticipation, not because of Su Yan herself, of course, but because of... her

divine ability!

Throughout his years of practicing cultivation, Meng Hao had acquired all sorts of divine abilities and magical techniques. Not many of them left him moved, or left him with a feeling that the technique was especially powerful.... However, during the times he had fought with Wang Mu and Wang Tengfei, they had used magical techniques of the Wang Clan which had left him shaken. In fact, because of those battles, he had even gotten the idea of trying to acquire some of those magical techniques. Unfortunately, the Wang Clan of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was one of the great clans, and to acquire their Daoist magics would be incredibly difficult.

Just now, the divine ability used by this pink-robed young woman also left him quite shaken.

“What Daoist magic was that? It only took seven steps to collapse my Paragon Bridge. Theoretically, it might have something to do with her cultivation base, or the fact that my understanding of the Paragon Bridge isn’t complete, meaning I can’t fully utilize it.

“However, that just goes to show that her Daoist magic of seven steps has its own unique aspects.” Meng Hao was lost in thought for a while as he chased Su Yan. Finally, he raised his right hand, performed an incantation gesture, and then pointed at her.

That wave of a finger caused his 123 Immortal meridians to materialize into a shocking Flying Rain-Dragon, which roared and beat its wings as it shot toward her in pursuit.

Su Yan’s face flickered as she saw the Flying Rain-Dragon bearing down on her. She gritted her teeth, performed an incantation gesture, and then placed her hands on top of her ears. Then she took a deep breath, using some unknown Daoist magic that caused the sounds of thunder to echo out. A huge wind kicked up, and Su Yan almost seemed to turn into a vortex that rapidly absorbed the power of Heaven and Earth.

Next... she suddenly turned her head toward Meng Hao, opened her mouth, and roared!

That roar was loud enough to tear open the Heavens and shred the earth!

The sound of it superseded all other sounds in the world. It shredded the void, causing a massive wind to kick up. Meng Hao started to tremble, and his black beetles began to rock back and forth. Blood oozed out of his ears, and his mind vibrated so intensely that it felt as if his head was about to explode.

That roar almost didn't seem to be coming from Su Yan, but rather a giant. It was filled with intense savagery, and an unparalleled domineering air that seemed to defy the confines of destiny.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

Sound waves transformed into an attack that blasted toward Meng Hao. The result was that he was physically lifted up and pushed backward.

Su Yan coughed up a mouthful of blood; clearly utilizing this divine ability of roaring came at a great price. Her face was pale white as she sped forward anxiously.

"I just need to delay things a bit longer," she muttered to herself, pushing for more speed. "If I can build up enough speed, I can break out of this place!"

Meng Hao finally stabilized himself, wiped away the blood that had oozed out of his ears, and looked at Su Yan as she fled. His eyes began to shine with an even more intense light.

"You can't escape," he said. "No matter what you say, I'm going to catch you!" His eyes flickered coldly, and his heart beat with excitement. As far as he was concerned, this pink-robed young woman was a treasure trove of divine abilities and Daoist magics.

It would be a big pain to try to acquire one of the Wang Clan's Divine abilities. But he would be equally content to get his hands on some of this girl's magic.

The wave of a hand caused all 500 of the black beetles to let out a collective roar. Their eyes were red with madness as they charged forth.

Meng Hao's cultivation base exploded with power. However, Su Yan was moving so quickly that she was already some distance off. Meng Hao snorted coldly, and extended his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. His eyes flickered with a Demonic glint as electricity danced about, and he vanished.

At the same time, Su Yan had almost built up enough speed to unleash another Daoist magic. Her body was beginning to grow blurry, and ripples were spreading out into the void. It was almost as if a tunnel were forming, a tunnel which she was just about to break into.

In that moment, however, countless sparks of electricity suddenly appeared all over her body. This development occurred too suddenly, and she could sense something happening that caused her face to fall.

Suddenly, she vanished, and Meng Hao appeared in her place. Of course, their speeds were different, so the moment Meng Hao appeared, the void tunnel promptly closed up.

At the same time, Su Yan reappeared in the spot Meng Hao had just been occupying... right in the middle of 500 black beetles!

The moment Su Yan appeared, the 500 black beetles immediately roared and shot toward her, radiating explosive ferocity. Su Yan was shocked to the core, and an expression of disbelief and shock instantly appeared on her face.

"That cauldron... how could it be here!?!? Is your surname Wang?" 1

Meng Hao's eyes flickered almost imperceptibly, but he didn't say anything. Instead, he sent his cultivation base rotating rapidly. The Essence of Divine Flame appeared, combined with the power of 33 Heavens, to shoot directly toward Su Yan.

The 500 black beetles all attacked with full force. In response, the shocked Su Yan performed an incantation gesture and waved her hand, causing divine abilities to shoot out. However, the Ghost Eyes on the backs of these black beetles began to glow, and were easily able to repel her attack, and even began to grow more ferocious.

As Meng Hao closed in, the Essence of Divine Flame caused Su Yan's mind to spin. She was getting very anxious, but her face filled with determination as she raised her right hand. Instantly, light began to shine out from the creases in her palm, causing three palm prints to begin to appear in the air around her, surrounded by rumbling sounds.

However, before the palm prints could finish forming, the surrounding black beetles took advantage of the moment to attack. Su Yan fell back, blood spraying from her mouth.

It was at this point that, some distance behind Su Yan, two beams of light could be seen shooting through the Ruins of Immortality. Apparently sensing the ripples of magic, they headed toward Su Yan and Meng Hao.

Before the approaching figures could even be seen, a voice could be heard from them.

“My master is Meng Hao! Do you hear me? Meng Hao! He's the ruler of the Ruins of Immortality, the Lord of the Nine Mountains and Seas! I was just joking with you, alright? Y-y-you... you're being so petty! Why are you trying to kill us! You can't blame me! Everything I did was taught to me by my master! Why don't you go looking for him, alright? Aiya! How dare you attack us! Dammit! Lord Fifth is really getting pissed off! You just wait and see! My master definitely won't let you off the hook!”

*

1. I saw a lot of questions on the Chinese internet about this part where Su Yan mentions the cauldron and asks if his surname is Wang. Apparently Wang Lin from Renegade Immortal had a cauldron with similar properties to this one. However, based on the answers I read in a few threads, that cauldron was clearly destroyed, so it couldn't be the same one. However, this begs the question of why she would be saying something like this? There were various speculations about that too....

Chapter 1033: The Might of the Echelon!

Of those two beams of light, one contained a colorful parrot with a meat jelly in the form of a bell attached to its ankle. The bell continuously let out tinkling sounds which echoed about.

The other beam... contained a young woman. A grim expression covered her face, and blue veins popped out on her forehead. She actually looked a bit haggard, as if she were so aggravated she was about to go crazy. It was... Li Ling'er.

The parrot looked scraggly and somewhat gaunt as it flew through the air. Behind it was an enormous creature, tens of thousands of meters wide and terrifying to the extreme.

It was like a giant sphere, covered with endless amounts of fur which drifted about. It had a single eye that stared out with boundless coldness. Occasionally, the fur which covered the creature would form into tentacles that would slash around, destroying anything they touched. Currently, this bizarre creature was chasing the parrot and Li Ling'er.

Although the creature had a terrifying aura, and was physically shocking to look at, it wasn't moving incredibly fast. It was almost as if it was in conflict with the natural laws that existed in the Ruins of Immortality, resulting in constant pressure weighing down on it. Therefore, as it moved along, it was surrounded by vaguely flickering light.

"I was just messing around with you!" the parrot cried angrily. "What are you being so vengeful for!?"

"Yeah, that's exactly right! He's being immoral! That's wrong! Just wait until Lord Third gets a bit more powerful, I'll definitely convert him!"

"Shut up! Shut up! SHUT UP!!" shouted Li Ling'er, who was on the verge of going crazy. Being around the parrot and meat jelly made her feel that her sanity was crumbling away.

After being flung out into the Ruins of Immortality by Patriarch Reliance, she had spent her time exclusively with the parrot and meat

jelly. They had cautiously made their way through the Ruins of Immortality, trying to figure a way out.

At first, things had gone well. She could deal with the meat jelly's constant chatter and the parrot's extreme arrogance. After all, before giving a dog a beating, one still has to consider who its master is. Meng Hao had saved her so, naturally, she had chosen to put up with his little pets.

However... for some reason, the damned parrot seemed to have some completely perverted addictions. Li Ling'er had watched wide-eyed on several occasions in which the parrot, upon simply encountering creatures with fur or feathers, would suddenly act like a complete moron. Regardless of how powerful the creature it encountered was, the parrot would whoop with delight and speed excitedly toward it.

What happened after that was an assault on Li Ling'er's eyes, and yet she couldn't help but gape. She almost felt like her head was going to explode, and everything she had always believed was toppled over.

The most recent time it happened was when the parrot assaulted the gigantic sphere. Originally, that sphere hadn't even been moving. However, after several hundred rounds with the parrot, it got as mad as a hornet. The sphere-like creature couldn't take it any more, and let out a roar that almost shattered Li Ling'er's cultivation base.

They had fled immediately, but the sphere had apparently endured too much humiliation, and chased them in a rage.

As they fled, they had sensed the ripples of magical techniques, and had surmised that they came from people. The parrot had then suggested they go in that direction, which they did immediately, preparing to plead for aid in this moment of disaster.

Almost as soon as they got close, Meng Hao saw the parrot and Li Ling'er, as did Su Yan. However, Su Yan's attention was more drawn to the gigantic sphere following them.

"Mooneater!" she breathed. Her face fell and her heart began to pound. The sudden appearance of the Mooneater cut off her path of escape. In

front was Meng Hao and his black beetles, and behind her was the Mooneater. She was caught in a dragnet, and the result was that she lost almost all hope.

“Dammit, how could this be happening? There are only a few Mooneaters in all of the Ruins of Immortality. Normally they just sleep, and wouldn’t wake up even if Heaven and Earth collapsed. Even if they do awake, the natural laws are different, so they don’t move around. Wh-what’s going on? Why is this Mooneater chasing those people?”

“How could that woman and that parrot possibly have provoked a Mooneater into such heights of rage that it would pursue them!?” Su Yan’s scalp was numb; she was well-aware of how terrifying an enraged Mooneater could be. She was just about to try to flee, when Meng Hao blazed toward her with his Essence of Divine Flame.

Su Yan immediately performed an incantation gesture, causing a divine ability to appear to fight back against Meng Hao. It only took a moment for the two of them to be locked in a raging battle. As they fought back and forth, Su Yan suffered multiple defeats. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she realized that although she was well-matched with Meng Hao, she was constantly distracted by the need to avoid the surrounding black beetles. This caused her to have several close calls.

At the same time, the Mooneater was getting closer and closer. The coldness in its eyes seemed capable of destroying any living thing that it encountered.

“Dammit!!” Her face flickered as blood oozed out of her mouth. She knew that she couldn’t hold on very much longer, perhaps ten breaths of time at most. Then she would be defeated.

Gritting her teeth, her expression became one of incredible resolve. She allowed Meng Hao’s Essence of Divine Flame attack to slam into her, causing blood to spray from her mouth as she was seriously injured. However, she borrowed momentum from the attack to break out of the encircling black beetles, and then head... directly toward the Mooneater.

As she sped forward, she extended her right hand, causing all of her

blood to surge. Moments later, a strange, sweet odor began to emanate off of her.

No cultivator would be able to detect anything unusual about that fragrance, but it instantly caused the Mooneater to look over. All of a sudden, a huge opening appeared on its body that almost looked like a mouth.

It looked completely savage as it opened up directly in the middle of the single eye, giving the creature two eyes. The mouth was filled with rows and rows of razor-sharp fangs, tens of thousands of them, glinting coldly. It almost seemed as if the creature's entire body was made up of fangs!

The gigantic mouth breathed in, and Su Yan tumbled forward like a kite with its string cut, heading directly toward the Mooneater.

In the blink of an eye, she had flown past the parrot, as well as Li Ling'er, who were still gaping in sight after having caught sight of Meng Hao moments ago.

Now, the two of them, as well as the meat jelly, watched as the Mooneater open its mouth. When they saw the innumerable ghastly fangs inside, their shock turned into terror.

Meng Hao frowned. Su Yan appeared to be on the verge of being swallowed up by the Mooneater. Even if he used the Lightning Cauldron to switch places with her... unfortunately, he would then be swallowed by the enormous creature.

"What a clever plan!" he thought. He instantly realized what Su Yan was trying to do. She had obviously incited the creature into trying to swallow her up. Presumably, she had a way to get out of the creature's mouth even if it did swallow her. She was using this as a way to escape, and also to ensure that Meng Hao couldn't use his Lightning Cauldron. "Well, you still won't be able to get away!"

Meng Hao was too entranced with Su Yan's Daoist magics. Despite the sudden turn of events, his eyes still flickered as he slapped his bag of holding to produce a Nirvana Fruit!

This was not his Nirvana Fruit, it was the Nirvana Fruit of the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan!

Without the slightest bit of hesitation, Meng Hao shoved the fruit into his forehead. Rumbling filled his mind as it sank down into him. At the same time, he felt something swelling up inside of him.

RUUUUMMBLE! As Meng Hao looked up, he could clearly sense his Immortal meridians exploding with power, growing stronger as his cultivation base climbed higher.

33 Heavens collapsed, transforming into boundless Immortal light that poured over Meng Hao, transforming into an Imperial robe. As Meng Hao hovered there in the void, he no longer looked like the Immortal Realm Paragon. He was a step beyond that... he was the Immortal Emperor of ancient times!

Li Ling'er's eyes went wide. She had observed this same thing happening before, although on a screen. Meng Hao was now bursting with a powerful energy that made him capable of killing even Ancient Realm cultivators with three extinguished Soul Lamps.

However, this was her first time sensing what it was like in person, and it sent her heart pounding. Her cultivation base trembled, and her Immortal meridians felt compelled to acquiesce to Meng Hao.

Su Yan was terrified. She could never have imagined that Meng Hao would have a trump card like this. Her scalp was tingling as she pushed with everything she had to fly toward the Mooneater. She was well aware that reaching it was her only hope.

An indescribable energy rose up from Meng Hao as he stared coldly over at Su Yan nearing the Mooneater. Face expressionless, he took a step forward.

That single step took him past Li Ling'er and the parrot. He then flicked his sleeve, causing a gentle power to push Li Ling'er and the parrot backward, far away from the Mooneater.

His second step caused him to vanish and then reappear between Su Yan

and the Mooneater.

Su Yan was now filled with hopelessness. She exploded out with all of the magical techniques and divine abilities she could muster. However, Meng Hao's hand snaked forward, shattering them all before... clamping onto her neck.

His hand was icy, and as soon as it touched Su Yan, her cultivation base was locked down by Meng Hao's Immortal power.

"We don't have enough enmity built up between us for me to kill you," he said. "So be a good girl, and I won't slaughter you."

Simultaneously, one of the Mooneater's tentacles shot toward them. Just when Meng Hao was about to dodge out of the way, the tentacle suddenly stopped moving. It was almost as if it had sensed something on Meng Hao, causing it to instantly shrink back.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he turned to look at the Mooneater and its gaping maw, which was now only about 30 meters away. The Mooneater was actually so terrified it was trembling, and... it gradually began to back up. Slowly, its huge mouth closed.

Within its solitary eye was a terror that caused Su Yan to be filled with astonishment!

It was almost as if the thing was afraid of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly. Just now, when he had been on the verge of dodging to the side, he had felt something inside of him... the sealing mark placed on him by the white-robed woman when she had made him 13th in the Echelon!

The mark suddenly appeared on Meng Hao's forehead, flashing brightly.

Meng Hao began to think about the white-robed woman's status as a Paragon, and his heart trembled. Continuing to hold Su Yan with his left hand, he raised his right hand and made a dismissive gesture toward the Mooneater.

"Get out of here," he said experimentally, all the while preparing to back

up if necessary.

The gigantic Mooneater was trembling visibly, and Li Ling'er, Su Yan, the parrot, and the meat jelly were all watching with eyes wide. The Mooneater almost seemed to nod in response to Meng Hao before backing up and disappearing off into the distance.

Li Ling'er gaped at Meng Hao, hovering there clad in his Imperial robes of Immortal light, energy surging. He was almost like a Paragon of Heaven and Earth as he waved his hand, causing an enormous, terrifying creature to back down. That image was almost like a scene from a painting, becoming something firmly implanted in Li Ling'er's mind, and would never go away.

The parrot blinked, and the meat jelly stared in shock.

As for Su Yan, a complex expression suddenly appeared on her face regarding Meng Hao.

"You're... in the Echelon?!"

Chapter 1034: We're Not Suited

The Mooneater slowly faded away into the sky of the Ruins of Immortality. Meng Hao hovered in midair, the energy of the Immortal Emperor slowly receding. Eventually, the Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead, which he then put into his bag of holding. He also placed numerous restrictive spells onto Su Yan, sealing her so that he could throw her into his bag of holding as well.

Before she disappeared, a cold smile could be seen on her face. However, the shock and other complex emotions in her eyes could not be concealed.

Meng Hao ignored that, however. Next, he turned to face the parrot and Li Ling'er.

Li Ling'er subconsciously avoided his gaze. Her past impressions of Meng Hao still remained in her mind, and currently, her heart was filled with conflicting emotions, including confusion.

She was very certain that, in the past, she had hated him to the bone. That was especially the case considering how he had humiliated her. When she had learned that it had been arranged for the two of them to be married, her initial reaction had been that she would rather die.

She hadn't been able to even imagine how to handle being paired with Meng Hao as a beloved partner. To her, it would have been like a living nightmare.

Therefore, she had chosen to flee the marriage. Of course, she had never expected that she would end up being rescued by the very person she was fleeing.

Meng Hao could sense the conflict inside of Li Ling'er, and he looked away with a light sigh. He knew that she should have been back in the Li Clan at a time like this. The fact that he found her being pursued by Yi Fazi clearly indicated that she had left her clan.

It was easy to guess why. Considering the imminent marriage alliance, the fact that Li Ling'er had left her clan indicated that she had chosen to

flee, just like he had. There was no other conclusion that he could come to.

It was at this point that the parrot cleared its throat. “Haowie, why are you butting into other people’s affairs?” it said, sounding as wise and proud as he could. “That was Lord Fifth’s beloved concubine! Lord Fifth wasn’t afraid of it! It was just my way of getting it to come out of its shell.

“Well, now that you made it go away.... Ai. Well, forget about it. Just never mind. I guess it just goes to show that there was no destiny between us.”

Currently, the five hundred black beetles were swirling around in the air around Meng Hao, and the drone of their wings echoed out in all directions. Because of that, Meng Hao still gave off the feeling that he was someone that shouldn’t be provoked, despite the fact that he no longer emanated the energy of the Immortal Emperor.

Each and every one of the insects in the small army had a Ghost Eye on its back, which emanated a sinister coldness. The bugs themselves had cold, emotionless eyes, causing a harsh aura to slowly exude.

Even an Ancient Realm expert would feel fear when looking upon these black beetles.

Meng Hao glanced back at Li Ling’er and asked, “So, that old turtle left already?”

Before Li Ling’er could answer, the bell-form meat jelly attached to the Parrot’s ankle suddenly roared, “That old bastard is completely immoral! Evil to the max! It deserves a horrible death! Lord Third solemnly swears an oath to convert it! That damnable old bastard of a turtle actually had the nerve to toss me aside and run off by himself!!

“I, Lord Third, was a fool to take pity on it earlier, and give it so much advice. Grrr! Lord Third is so pissed off! That thing is shameless! Misguided! A complete bully!!” As the meat jelly raged, it was clear that it was infuriated at Patriarch Reliance, and even felt that it had been subjected to a great injustice.

Hearing the meat jelly raging, the parrot then chimed in: “That’s totally right! That bastard pushed things too far. Dammit!” However, the parrot went a bit further, going on to make a declaration of a further aspiration. “Next time I see it, Lord Fifth is going to make sure it knows how awesome I am! I’m gonna turn it into one of my beloved concubines!”

Ignoring the two buffoons, Meng Hao’s body flickered as he moved to a nearby black beetle and sat down cross-legged. After glancing around, he looked back at Li Ling’er and then cleared his throat.

“Fellow Daoist Li,” he said, “I think there have been some misunderstandings between us in the past....”

Li Ling’er looked up at him. The word ‘misunderstanding’ caused her to think about many things, especially Meng Hao’s multiple usages of his palm. When she thought about that, she still felt humiliated and angry. She could almost sense a lingering numbness and pain in her buttocks.

“However, I did rescue you, right?” Meng Hao continued. “Although, you still owe me some money....”

Li Ling’er frowned. “That’s because you forced me to write a promissory note!” she said, word by word.

“Right, right. Well, the process isn’t important. We’re talking about Karma, so you definitely owe me money.” When he saw the look on Li Ling’er’s face in response to this, Meng Hao quickly added, “But don’t worry. You don’t need to pay me back anymore!”

Based on Meng Hao’s personality, it took quite a bit of effort for him to force those words out.

“Look, neither of us have it easy in life, so why make things harder for each other? Our clans want an alliance, and they’re willing to sacrifice us to get it. It seems obvious that the only reason we ran into each other here is because we’re both trying to get away from that marriage.

“In that respect, I think we’re both in the same boat!” A bright glow appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes as he continued, “Look, I rescued you. I also happen to know that I’m quite handsome, and a lot of girls like me. For

example, take that wench that I captured earlier. She made a move on me too, but I turned her down. Then she tried to do all sorts of evil things to me. Stuff like that can't be forgiven!" Meng Hao said, without even a hint of shame coloring his face. It was a good thing Su Yan couldn't hear what he was saying, otherwise she would have been so angry that blood would have sprayed out of her mouth like a fountain.

"Although..." he continued somberly, "Fellow Daoist Li, you must not under any circumstances continue to misinterpret my feelings. Trust me, nothing's going to happen between the two of us. I have absolutely no intention of pursuing you! Besides, I'm already married. The two of us... just aren't suited for each other."

In response to these words, the parrot stared, the meat jelly blinked, and Li Ling'er gaped in shock. She had never, ever seen someone praise themselves with such a straight face.

"YOU!" she cried, eyes wide.

"Seriously," he said, taking a careful step backward. "We're not suited for each other. Fellow Daoist Li, I know that the image of me surging with energy earlier definitely left you with a deep impression of me. However, you really need to control yourself. Don't let yourself fall for me!"

"Women must learn to conduct themselves with dignity in life. The two of... just aren't meant to be."

"Don't worry, Meng Hao!!" Li Ling'er growled through clenched teeth. "If I had to choose between you and a pig, I would chose the pig!"

"You really mean it??" said Meng Hao, his eyes shining brightly.

"You.... Meng Hao, I, Li Ling'er, always follow through on my word!" Li Ling'er was feeling very vexed. Meng Hao was making it seem like she couldn't wait to marry him. That was even more the case when, in response to her words just now, Meng Hao appeared to be sighing with relief. That caused Li Ling'er's rage to flare even hotter.

Meng Hao then let out a hearty laugh. Smiling, he waved a finger at a nearby black beetle.

“Fellow Daoist Li, now that our misunderstandings have been straightened out, I’d like to express my condolences. Come come, have a seat on this bug. I’ll escort you safely out of the Ruins of Immortality.”

When Li Ling’er heard this, her fury burned uncontrollably, and she looked at Meng Hao with gritted teeth and said, “Condolences? Meng Hao, are you even able to talk without being crass? What the hell do you mean, ‘condolences’? Don’t tell me you actually believe that I, Li Ling’er, thought of you as the love of my life or something? You think that you refusing me necessitates condolences?”

Meng Hao scratched his head and sighed, his expression one of helplessness.

“Very well, then, I rescind my condolences.”

“What do you mean you rescind your condolences!?!?” Li Ling’er felt like she was about to go crazy.

“No condolences!” he replied quickly. “Even though I refused your expression of love, even though I crushed all the good feelings you had toward me. Even though from now on, all you’ll be able to do is gaze at me silently from a distance. Despite all that, I really offer no condolences! Alright? Happy?”

Li Ling’er threw her head back and howled. She gripped her hair in both hands and tugged it hard. It was almost like it was impossible to talk to Meng Hao without going absolutely crazy.

Trembling, she thought about everything that had happened since she had left the clan, and the grief that welled up from her heart caused tears to flow out. She said nothing further. She simply sat down on the beetle’s back, tears rolling down her cheeks.

Meng Hao didn’t say anything more either. The parrot and meat jelly looked at each other, then began to whisper back and forth. Occasionally, they would look over at Meng Hao and Li Ling’er, and the meat jelly’s expression would be one of puzzlement. In contrast, the parrot’s was one of worldly-wise understanding as it apparently explained certain matters to the meat jelly.

The meat jelly nodded its head several times empathetically.

Everything quieted down. The black beetles buzzed along as Meng Hao escorted Li Ling'er off into the distance. Because of the beetles, their journey through the Ruins of Immortality went along with few hitches. Meng Hao would look around occasionally and, based on his past experiences in the Ruins of Immortality, was able to gradually lead them out from the depths of the ruins, and toward their border.

Several days later, the broken remnants of the Ruins of Immortality grew more and more sparse. Not far off in the distance, the border was visible, and beyond that, a sea.

It was not a true sea, but rather, a body of dense mists that grew so thick that they eventually sank downward, forming into a sea of mist. Meng Hao was able to sense that at its very depths, the mist was so thick that there might actually be a true sea there.

This place... was none other than the Ninth Sea!

Meng Hao's eyes glowed brightly as he stood up on the black beetle's back. The entire army of beetles didn't slow down a bit; they continued to speed along, getting closer and closer to the border.

However, it was at this point that, all of a sudden, a person appeared out of thin air up ahead.

It was a woman, wearing a white robe, and when she stepped out of the void, it seemed as if the entire Ruins of Immortality went dark. It was like the whole world, including all the light of the stars, was gathered on her person. Even the Ninth Sea off in the distance went still.

This woman seemed to be matchlessly supreme, as if in front of her, even natural law would cease to operate.

She hovered there quietly, looking at Meng Hao.

As soon as he laid eyes on the woman, Meng Hao's mind rumbled. He instantly sent a message to the black beetles to stop moving. However, he didn't actually need to do so: all of them were trembling, and didn't dare to approach the woman.

“Meng Hao offers greetings, Senior!” he said, quivering, clasping his hands and bowing very deeply. This woman was the same one who had placed him in the Echelon... the female Paragon!

In that instant, the parrot ducked its head like it was trying to hide, and it looked scared. The meat jelly was uncharacteristically silent, and didn't even open its mouth.

Li Ling'er could sense the terrifying aura emanating out from the white-robed woman, and immediately stood up and gave a curtsying bow.

The woman's gaze passed from Meng Hao and Li Ling'er to come to rest on the meat jelly. “I recently recalled a matter from the past.... Do you still remember me?”

The meat jelly quivered.

“NO!” When it responded, its voice was archaic but light. When it spoke, Meng Hao couldn't help but think that something was wrong. He had never, ever heard the garrulous meat jelly only speak a single word.

Chapter 1035: The Meat Jelly was the Lightning Emperor?

The white-robed woman remained silent for a moment, looking at the meat jelly with a complex expression, as if she were recalling the past. Meng Hao wasn't sure why, but for some reason it almost looked like an expression of... bitter resentment.

All of a sudden, Meng Hao's scalp began to go numb, and he subconsciously looked over at the meat jelly, then back at the white-robed Paragon. He had hoped that he had been mistaken, and that there was not really a look of bitter resentment on her face. And yet, when he looked back at her, he was even more certain than before, causing him to blink.

After a moment of silence, the white-robed Paragon slowly asked, "Is it that you don't remember, or that you're not willing to admit it?"

"Don't remember," the meat jelly replied, its voice hoarse, but lacking the slightest trace of its usual long-windedness.

"Years ago, there was a cultivator whose name was Lei Daozi 1. He was a lightning cultivator, and one of the nine Emperors. He was known as the Lightning Emperor. Did you know him?" The white-robed woman expression grew more and more complex as she looked at the meat jelly. Sometimes she remembered things clearly, other times things were a blur. However, recently, she had begun to recall many things about the past.

"Never heard of him." The meat jelly's voice was as ancient as ever, and yet, now seemed to contain a hint of pain.

The white-robed woman looked deeply at the meat jelly for a moment, then sighed and softly said, "If it weren't for the great catastrophe, he was the most likely to have become the fourth Paragon. Back then he and I... had an agreement." 2

The meat jelly maintained its silence, saying not a single word.

The white-robed woman closed her eyes for a while, and when she opened them again, they were looking at the parrot. Her expression was

one of revulsion, and in response, the parrot lowered its head even further and glanced around furtively. From Meng Hao's perspective, the parrot looked very nervous, perhaps even scared.

Finally the woman turned from the parrot to look at Meng Hao. Her voice cool, she said, "Well, you're doing well. Once you enter the Ancient Realm, you will definitely become part of my plans!" Finally, she turned to leave.

Meng Hao was not a newcomer to the world of cultivation. He was used to schemes and counter-schemes, and knew not to take everything people said at face value. Therefore, it was obvious to him that something was going on beneath the surface here. Clearly, she had only paid perfunctory attention to himself and the parrot. The true reason she had shown up was because of the meat jelly!

It almost seemed like, she had only shown up to ask it those few questions. He had long since known that the parrot and meat jelly had extraordinary backgrounds. However, he could never have imagined that they were wrapped up with the white-robed Paragon. As for the meat jelly, apparently, its past involved some inspiring and tragic tale.

Just when the white-robed woman was about to leave, she suddenly stopped in place, looked at Li Ling'er, and said, "Eee?"

As she peered over, and her eyes filled with a strange gleam.

"You look just like...." she murmured softly. She waved a finger, causing Li Ling'er to involuntarily fly through the air to hover in front of the white-robed woman.

"Are you willing to practice cultivation under me?" she asked, her tone serious.

Li Ling'er stared in shock. Based on how Meng Hao had treated and talked to the woman, she could tell that there was something unfathomably mysterious about her.

As she hesitated, she looked over and happened to see the shocked look on Meng Hao's face. With a cold, inward harrumph, she ceased any

hesitation and clasped hands toward the white-robed woman.

“Junior is willing!”

The white-robed woman nodded slightly, then turned. As she did, a cloud appeared beneath Li Ling’er’s feet, which carried her alongside the woman as she left.

Li Ling’er looked a bit apprehensive, but when she turned and saw Meng Hao’s astonished expression, she suddenly felt a great sense of contentment, and glared into his eyes.

Meng Hao truly was shocked, and had the feeling that he had been neglected. The fact that the meat jelly had a mysterious background was one thing. However, he had practiced cultivation to the level of becoming the Immortal Realm Paragon. When he absorbed the Nirvana Fruit, he could even reach the level of the Immortal Emperor. And yet, from what he could tell, Li Ling’er seemed to attract even more attention from the white-robed woman than he did.

And then there was the ‘peasant-become-king’ attitude she exuded as she stared at him hatefully. It was as if she was trying to convey that when they met again in the future, their relative positions would be very different.

Rolling his eyes inwardly, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Li Ling’er, a solemn expression on his face, as if he couldn’t hold back from expressing his condolences to her.

“Ling’er, I apologize. It doesn’t matter if you have a new position, I still can’t take you as a wife. I’m already married, and you and I just don’t suit each other. I wish you all the best, and hope that you can someday find your own happiness.” Meng Hao sighed, and his eyes shone with an expression of condolence.

As soon as Li Ling’er heard his words, she trembled. “Shut the hell UP, Meng Hao!!”

Glaring at him, she gritted her teeth and stamped her foot. With that, she ignored Meng Hao and followed the white-robed woman off into the

distance.

After they disappeared, sighs of relief could be heard coming from the mouths of both the parrot and the meat jelly.

“Now THAT was scary!” Lord Fifth exclaimed. “So, the old Demongranny has gotten some of her memories back!!” It patted its chest with its wing, as if it had just survived some harrowing experience.

“Thankfully, it seems that she only got some of her memories back, not a lot,” the parrot murmured. “Otherwise, she wouldn’t have just looked annoyed when she saw me. She would have plucked me and roasted me for dinner.” It seemed truly surprised to still be alive.

The meat jelly let out a long sigh, after which its face lit up with excitement and it said, “How was my acting!? Hahaha! Meng Hao, and you, you old pigeon, tell the truth. Was Lord Third’s acting good or not, huh? Good or not!?”

“Hahaha! Hey, I almost forgot that we had a bet! Lord Third wins! Lord Third’s acting ability is incredible! However, it seems a bit wrong and immoral. Pidgeon Fifth, don’t you agree?” Now that the meat jelly was speaking, it blabbered on, apparently having held its tongue for far too long earlier and was now looking to make up for it.

“Your acting is worth a fart!” said the Parrot, smacking the meat jelly. “You almost gave it all away! You said way too much! Next time, remember that when you talk to the Demongranny, you should only say one word!”

Meng Hao stared at the meat jelly in shock. The meat jelly had now reverted to behaving like it always had in the past, and from their dialogue just now, it seemed that it and the parrot had been betting with each other about something.

Meng Hao felt a headache coming on, and wasn’t sure what to say to the two ninnies.

However, he couldn’t forget the ‘Lightning Emperor’ that the white-robed woman had mentioned. He looked thoughtfully over at the meat

jelly, but didn't ask any further questions. On many occasions in the past, he had tried to pry out information about their past, but to no avail. He had gotten used to that. Finally, he sent out his divine will, causing the black beetles to speed forward.

Several hours later, Meng Hao, along with the five hundred or so black beetles, and the incessantly bickering parrot and meat jelly, all emerged from the Ruins of Immortality. They hovered in the starry sky, and out in front of them was the Ninth Sea.

Thinking about everything that had happened recently, Meng Hao turned back to look through the Ruins of Immortality in the direction of Planet East Victory. His eyes then gleamed with determination as he turned and headed toward the Ninth Sea atop his black beetle.

"The Nine Seas God World will most likely finally give me all the rewards I earned during the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire." A thoughtful expression appeared in his eyes as he mused about it. The Three Great Daoist Societies had all agreed to accept him as a disciple because of his being in the Echelon, and had also expressed the intention of giving him some good fortune.

He also knew that he wouldn't be spending a lot of time in the Nine Seas God World. After picking up his prizes, he would practice cultivation for a bit, and then head to the other two Great Daoist Societies.

"The good fortune they will provide me is most likely something to help me get to the Ancient Realm as quickly as possible!" His eyes glittered. According to what the white-robed Paragon had said, it wouldn't be until he stepped into the Ancient Realm as a member of the Echelon that he would figure into her plans.

As for the Ancient Realm, he had his own path to tread.

"Absorb the Nirvana Fruits!" he thought with a frown. After leaving Planet East Victory, he had tried to absorb the Nirvana Fruits on multiple occasions. However, he couldn't permanently fuse with any of them, not even his own Nirvana Fruits.

Actually, not even Fang Wei had been able to stay fused with his Nirvana

Fruits for very long. That was something he had been able to sense during their battle.

Meng Hao maintained his silence as he got closer to the Ninth Sea. Occasionally he would pass traveling cultivators, but when they saw him and his five hundred black beetles, they would fearfully avoid him, not daring to get close.

He didn't want anyone to recognize who he was, so he used the black feather to change his appearance. Therefore, nobody who saw him had any idea that he was actually the preeminently famous Meng Hao of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

As he neared the Ninth Sea, he gradually heard crashing sounds like that of ocean waves. Up ahead, the sea of mist roiled unceasingly, and an indescribably boundless energy shook everything in the starry sky.

Meng Hao didn't waste any time. Occasionally, he would attempt to absorb the Nirvana Fruits, and he occasionally brought Su Yan out of his bag of holding. He would try to have casual and friendly conversations with her in the hope of convincing her to give him some of her Daoist magics in exchange for her freedom.

However, Su Yan would only look at him derisively and make piercing, uncompromising comments.

After several attempts, it was clear that no matter what line of reasoning he attempted, Su Yan would never agree. Finally, he had no more patience. Waving his hand, he covered her with restrictive spells, sealing her completely, whereupon he stuffed her into a bag of holding.

"I bet that if she goes through a bit of suffering, she won't be so uncooperative!" Unless absolutely necessary, Meng Hao didn't want to use Soulsearch. That was a very vile method, and there was no sort of unresolvable enmity between the two of them as of yet.

The best outcome, and his first choice, would be for her to cooperate and hand over some of her Daoist magics.

Several days later, Meng Hao, atop a black beetle, finally entered the

border region of the Ninth Sea. That black beetle was the only one he kept outside of his bag of holding as he looked out at the mists of the Ninth Sea, a strange gleam in his eyes.

The Ninth Sea seemed boundless, almost completely without end. Mist stretched out as far as the eye could see. Everything seemed damp, leading Meng Hao to the conclusion that there really was a huge sea at the bottom of all the mist.

“Such a huge sea....” he breathed. Back in the Fang Clan, he had seen a map of the Nine Mountains and Seas, and was aware that if he passed all the way through the Ninth Sea, he would end up in the region of the Eighth Mountain.

“The Ninth Mountain and Sea is not the end of the road for me!” As he looked off into the distance, his heart filled with lofty aspirations. On his path of cultivation, he wanted to be free and unfettered. He wanted true freedom and independence.

Heaven could not block his path, and Earth could not obstruct his way!

He patted his black beetle, which let out a roar as it transformed into a black beam of light that shot into the mists of the Ninth Sea.

Almost in the exact moment that he entered the Ninth Sea, countless eyes suddenly snapped open, both in the mists that surrounded him, and the blackness of the depths of the sea.

Those eyes belonged to numerous sea beasts and Sea Demons that inhabited the Ninth Sea. Normally speaking, they did not have conflicts with cultivators, but as of this moment, for some reason they all opened their eyes and roared, and their expressions were that of murderous intent.

It was as if there was something about Meng Hao’s aura that roused all of the sea beasts and Sea Demons of the Ninth Sea into a rage.

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1. Lei means “lightning.” Dao is “the Dao,” and Zi means “child” or

“son.” As I mentioned before “Daozi” is also what is translated as “Dao Child” when used as a title.

2. The word used here “agreement” is a very broad term in Chinese that can mean a lot of things. However, the vague implication based on the context would be some sort of romantic “agreement” or perhaps “engagement.” One of the C>E dictionaries I use even has “engagement” as a definition for this word. Of course, based on the context, you can’t tell exactly what she means, and it could potentially be just some other random “agreement”.

Chapter 1036: Nine Seas God World!

Almost in the same moment that the sea beasts and Sea Demons opened their eyes, some of the sea beasts closest to Meng Hao began to charge toward him through the mists of the Ninth Sea at top speed.

As they sped along, they caused the mists to seethe, and faint rumbling sounds to echo out. Meng Hao sat on his black beetle, bursting with lofty aspirations. Suddenly, his eyes narrowed, and he looked up ahead into the mists.

Without any warning, a roar exploded out, and the mists surged away from him as a huge seal burst onto the scene.

The seal was fully nine meters long, with razor-sharp teeth. It almost looked like a dog, except that it had no fur, only scales. It sped out of the mists toward Meng Hao, bursting with energy comparable to the Immortal Realm. In the blink of an eye, it was upon him.

Its eyes were filled with incredible killing intent, as if it simply couldn't live under the same sky as Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gaped, flabbergasted. This was his first time ever visiting the Ninth Sea, and as far as he could remember, he had never offended anyone from here, unless you counted Fan Dong'er.

The sudden appearance of this seal was completely unexpected, causing him to frown. A fishy aroma blasted into his face as he glared back coldly at the seal. When it was less than a meter away, seemingly on the verge of latching its jaws onto him, his right hand snaked out and clamped onto the seal's throat.

The seal let out a whimper as it screeched to a halt. It struggled violently, but no matter how it howled, Meng Hao's vice-like grip did not budge in the least. By now, his fleshly body strength was at the very peak of the Immortal Realm, meaning that only a handful of people were qualified to force him to use magical techniques. Most enemies in the Immortal Realm would be easily crushed by the power of his fleshly body alone.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with coldness as he squeezed down with his hand. Cracking sounds rang out, and the seal spasmed a few times before its meters-long body went limp, its neck having been crushed by Meng Hao, and its soul completely exterminated.

As it died, it glared at him with a look of vicious madness.

He frowned and loosened his hand, allowing the seal's corpse to drop down into the sea below. It was at this moment that, all of a sudden, more roars could be heard as more sea creatures began to charge toward him from all directions. In the blink of an eye, he was completely surrounded by dozens of sea beasts.

There were all sorts of creatures, each one completely vicious-looking. As soon as they appeared, they shot through the air toward Meng Hao, staring at him with madness and hatred.

There were even the ripples of magical techniques emanating out from them, causing Heaven and Earth to rumble, and the Ninth Sea to seethe.

Meng Hao's frown deepened. Something definitely felt off. With a cold harrumph, he lifted his right hand, causing his five hundred black beetles to emerge. They instantly spread out toward the sea beasts, causing buzzing sounds to fill the air.

In the blink of an eye, roaring filled the air as the sea beasts and the black beetles began to fight. However, no matter what the sea beasts did, their divine abilities were useless against the black beetles.

When they bit viciously at the black beetles with their sharp teeth, not even a scratch was left behind. In contrast, the beetles chomped at them voraciously; in the space of only about ten breaths of time, the entire area was stained red with blood, and nothing remained of the sea beasts except for corpses. What was left behind of their bodies was quickly devoured by the black beetles.

It was a bloody scene, but when it came to scenes of carnage, Meng Hao had seen much worse. Something like this wouldn't cause him to feel ill at ease. However, the frown never left his face.

He proceeded along, sending the black beetles ahead of him. In the short span of a few hours, numerous sea beasts from the Ninth Sea attacked him with reckless abandon, almost as if they were insane.

First it was a few at a time, then a few dozen at once, then hundreds attacked him simultaneously. There was even a Sea Dragon that rose up with them from the sea floor, roaring, filled with madness and hatred as it tried to consume Meng Hao.

“This isn’t because of Fan Dong’er,” he thought, killing intent flickering. The black beetles slashed at the sea beasts in a frenzy, causing miserable shrieks to ring out. As for the Sea Dragon, which was over thirty meters long, Meng Hao simply stepped forward and punched its head. It instantly began to fall apart into pieces, after which its body shattered.

Soon, Meng Hao’s mind was trembling. He was now surrounded by seething fog, and as he sent out his divine sense to scan the area, he could tell that almost a thousand sea beasts were charging toward him.

Some of those sea beasts were pitch-black and humanoid. Based on their aura, it was obvious that they were not ordinary sea beasts, but rather, something exceptionally vicious.

When they looked at Meng Hao, it was with towering hatred.

If that were all there were to it, it might not matter. But gradually, Meng Hao began to sense that it wasn’t just the sea beasts who hated him. It was almost as if, for some inexplicable reason, the Ninth Sea itself was trying to expel him.

Off in the distance, Meng Hao saw even more sea beasts charging toward him from all directions. Nobody truly knew how many of them existed in the boundless Ninth Sea. However, he could tell that if things didn’t end soon, he would become embroiled in a huge battle, and would continue to attract the attention of even more terrifying sea beasts, which caused his scalp to go numb.

If a creature appeared that was similar to the latter stages of the Ancient Realm, he might very well die.

“Dammit, what’s going on here!?” he thought, sending the black beetle flying upward, away from the surface of the sea itself. Behind him, more than a thousand sea beasts flew out in pursuit, roaring. It was at this point that he retrieved a command medallion from within his bag of holding.

Raising it high above his head, he cried out at the top of his lungs, “Disciple Meng Hao has returned to the Nine Seas God World and requests an escort from the sect!”

As his voice echoed out, he crushed the jade medallion. Ripples immediately spread out, carrying his voice echoing out into the depths of the sea.

By now, the swarm of attacking sea beasts was very close to him. Meng Hao was no pushover. Naturally, he couldn’t simply ignore so many sea beasts. Snorting coldly, he caused his Immortal meridians to explode with power, then lifted his left hand, summoning tens of thousands of mountains and sending them crushing down toward the sea beasts.

However, it was at this point that a cold voice suddenly echoed out from the bottom of the sea.

“You’re Meng Hao?” Even as the voice rang out, rumbling could be heard, and the surface of the sea parted as a figure appeared. He stepped out to hover on the mist above the sea.

It was a man, but he had a very strange appearance. His skin was pitch-black, and although it was not covered by scales, he did have a golden fish scale on his forehead.

He was clothed in the garb of a disciple of the Nine Seas God World, just as Fan Dong’er had been the first time Meng Hao had seen her.

As soon as he appeared, he glanced around at all the sea beasts, resulting in them instantly stopping in place. Then they backed off and then vanished into the waters.

Meng Hao scanned the area with divine sense and could tell that although they had calmed down, they hadn’t actually left. Furthermore, their eyes were filled with just as much hatred as before.

“Many thanks for getting me out of trouble, Fellow Daoist,” Meng Hao said, sighing with relief. He clasped hands and bowed toward the man. “Sir, I am Meng Hao, ordered by the Three Great Daoist Societies to come to report for duty at the Nine Seas God World!”

From the look of it, this man was not a cultivator, but rather some being that was somewhere between a sea beast and a human. It had cultivated some unique magical technique that allowed it to take human form.

It seemed like a Demon, and yet was different from Demons.

The man stared grimly at Meng Hao, hatred flickering in his eyes, as well as revulsion, all of which he seemed to be fighting to control.

“Come with me,” he said coldly. An instinctual killing intent seemed to rise up within him that he intentionally suppressed as he turned and flickered toward the bottom of the sea.

Meng Hao’s face darkened. He didn’t care much about sea beasts, but as for this being that was neither a human nor a Demon, he didn’t understand why it hated him and wanted to kill him. After all, he had never done anything to offend the Ninth Sea.

Remaining completely on guard, he watched as the man headed down into the sea, then collected his black beetles, and followed along with a cold harrumph.

The two of them proceeded along in single file, not talking, moving at top speed. Meng Hao could sense even more types of sea beasts as they neared the sea floor, and all of them seemed to view him as an enemy.

“Why exactly are they acting like this?” he thought. Gradually, they went deeper and deeper, until Meng Hao’s face finally flickered with shock. The pressure weighing down on him as he went deeper only continued to grow more intense. However, his cultivation base automatically rotated to push back against it.

The pressure was not because of some sort of sealing magic, but rather pressure that simply pushed down from the Ninth Sea itself. Because of that, his cultivation base was restricted, much the same as if he had been

carrying something very heavy. At the same time, magical techniques that would be easy to unleash on the surface, would be much harder to use here.

The deeper they went, the greater the pressure. Meng Hao was shaken as he realized that his cultivation base had already been reduced to about seventy percent of its normal level.

Finally, his eyes started to glow with excitement as he suddenly realized why the Nine Seas God World was so terrifying. If you spent long periods of time practicing cultivation there, then when you went out into the outside world, your cultivation base would explode up, and be even more powerful than before.

“The Three Great Daoist Societies really are incredible. There have to be special reasons why they have survived for so many years. Even just the special benefits provided from practicing cultivation here are enough to make the cultivators of the Nine Seas God World much stronger than those of most other sects.” At this point, he stopped fighting back against the Ninth Sea, and instead focused all of his efforts instead on enduring it.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the man led them to... a place that Meng Hao found completely shocking.

Here, at the bottom of the sea, was a land mass!

It was not the seafloor, but rather, floated in the middle of the waters. It stretched far out into the blackness, making it impossible to see where it ended!

It looked enormous, like the fabled undersea palace of the Dragon King. Ornamental rocks could be seen everywhere, placed next to sprawling buildings. Bizarre and exotic flowers could be seen, as well as mountain ranges, and even rivers and cities.

There were innumerable cultivators, flying around in beams of light. Sea Dragons could be seen swimming about, causing the entire world to overflow with the sensation of life.

Nine golden gates marked the entrance to the sect, and erected above

the top of the foremost gate was a sign with four words.

Nine Seas God World!

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1. In Chinese the word for “seal” is literally “sea dog”.

Chapter 1037: Hostility!

This was the Nine Seas God World, one of the Three Great Daoist Societies of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

It had existed for tens of thousands of years, stretching back into ancient times, seemingly eternal. Apparently, it had existed for as long as the Nine Mountains and Seas themselves. People who practiced cultivation here for a significant amount of time, and then left for the outside world, would experience an explosive rise in their cultivation base.

In all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the only sect which was so amazing that they could practice cultivation in the Ninth Sea itself, and even lower their sect to the bottom of the sea... was the Nine Seas God World!

Because of cultivation practices like that, it was no exaggeration to say that it was a God World. That was even more so when you considered the power of Heaven and Earth which existed there. In all of the Ninth Sea, this location had the most terrifying concentration of it.

In addition, the deeper you went in, the more boundless that energy became.

Meng Hao's mind trembled. He had been to many sects, but none of them had left him as shaken as he was now that he was looking at the Nine Seas God World.

He looked at the land mass spreading out in front of him like a continent, and he saw, not just cultivators, but other bizarre beings. They had humanoid bodies, but they were clearly another type of life form.

Each one had a life force that was reminiscent of a sea beast. Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he realized that these were unique Demonic Cultivators of the Ninth Sea!

They were not true Greater Demons, but had transmogrified during the course of their cultivation, gradually assuming their current appearances.

Even more shocking to Meng Hao was that the Nine Seas God World

actually floated some distance away from the bottom of the sea itself, separated by a mass of pitch black darkness.

The further down one went from there, the greater the pressure was, and the more energy of Heaven and Earth could be found. It could be said that to cultivators... the pressure exerted by the Ninth Sea made this place like a Holy Land for cultivation.

“Nine Seas God World....” he murmured, eyes shining with a strange light as he sensed the vast majesty of the place. He could feel the pressure from the Ninth Sea, and the fact that his cultivation base was limited to seventy percent of its normal power.

His eyes slid across the nine glittering gates that marked the entrance to the Nine Seas God World. Above the main gate were the words ‘Nine Seas God World,’ and as for the other golden gates, they were actually more like stone steles than actual gates!

Furthermore, the surfaces of those golden gate stone steles were packed with names, each one of which glittered with golden light that was visible to all cultivators in the Nine Seas God World. The names formed a list, and on each of the stone steles, the list included 10,000 names.

On one of the stone steles, Meng Hao saw Fan Dong’er’s name, and it was listed in the 94th position. Next to the golden characters that made up her name, a string of text could clearly be seen. It said, ... 24,000 meters down, 54 hours!

There were many other names that had the number 24,000 meters next to them, with a variety of different times.

Other name lists could be seen on the other stone steles, as if these were records of various trials by fire.

Meng Hao’s heart began to pound. The golden gate stone steles reminded him very much of the Medicine Pavilion and the Pill Pavilion back in the Fang Clan, as well as the stone stele he had seen in the Ancestral Land. The names all belonged to disciples of the Nine Seas God World, and their presence here indicated great honor and glory for those disciples.

A strange light began to gleam in Meng Hao's eyes as he followed the cold-eyed man, who completely ignored him as he led the way into the sect.

Occasionally, they would encounter disciples of the Nine Seas God World. When they saw the man leading the way, they would smile and nod, and then their gazes would turn to Meng Hao.

Some of those people were Demonic cultivators, and when they saw Meng Hao, they would gape in shock. But then, just as quickly, their eyes would be shot with blood, and murderous auras would surge up from them.

Meng Hao frowned as he followed the cold-faced man into the Nine Seas God World. Almost as soon as they set foot onto the land mass, it seemed like all of the Demonic cultivators in the entire Nine Seas God World, regardless of what they were doing at the moment, simultaneously looked up and stared at Meng Hao.

Very quickly, killing intent rose up in their eyes, as well as towering rage and disgust.

There were tens of thousands of these Demonic cultivators, and the feeling of having them all stare at him was something impossible to describe. Meng Hao's face flickered, and his eyes went wide.

That was especially so when he realized that some of the Demonic cultivators had Ancient Realm cultivation bases. When their cold gazes of hatred fell upon him, his heart began to pound.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but suddenly, streams of divine sense shot out from many of the residences that were visible, filling Meng Hao's heart with terror.

From the look of things, the tens of thousands of Demonic cultivators were just barely able to keep themselves under control. In sharp contrast, the human cultivators of the Nine Seas God World were looking curiously at Meng Hao. Immediately, people began to recognize him.

"That's Meng Hao!"

“I heard that he was accepted as a disciple by all of the Three Great Daoist Societies....”

“In the battle of Planet East Victory, virtually the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea saw him rise to prominence. He’s the Immortal Realm Paragon!” The cultivators all wore different expressions. Some were surprised, some wore cold looks, and others looked derisive.

However, regardless of the various cultivators’ expressions, when they sensed the strange behavior of the Demonic cultivators, they were all shocked.

The strange feeling of disquiet in Meng Hao’s heart continued to grow even more intense. He was more on guard than ever as the cold-faced man led him through the air across the Nine Seas God World. As they wound their way deeper in, the killing intent and ferocity of the Demonic cultivators only continued to grow stronger.

It was around this time that, all of a sudden, a cold snort echoed from among a group of Demonic cultivators, followed by a bright beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

It was a middle-aged man, extremely handsome, with a fish scale on his forehead. He wore a white robe, and had two red horns growing out from his forehead. He radiated a powerful, murderous aura, and moved with incredible speed. As he closed in on Meng Hao, he extended his right hand, causing ripples to spread out that formed into nine flying swords.

In the blink of an eye, the nine flying swords took on the appearance of nine crimson loaches. They roared, expressions vicious as they shot through the air. As for the middle-aged man, he had a murderous aura and an explosive cultivation base. The power of Immortal meridians emanated out, not quite 100; nevertheless, they had at least 90.

Upon seeing him attack, the faces of all the other Demonic cultivator disciples of the Nine Seas God World flickered with even more killing intent.

As for the Demonic cultivator who had escorted him thus far, the man hesitated for a moment, but didn’t berate the other Demonic cultivator or

attempt to block his way. He acted almost as if he didn't see, proceeding along as if he didn't care whether Meng Hao was able to catch up or even got killed.

Meng Hao frowned and backed up by several paces. He waved his hand, causing a chain of mountains to appear and block the nine loach swords.

"Fellow Daoist, what's the meaning of this?" he asked as he backed up. He really didn't want his initial entrance into the Nine Seas God World to be marked by conflict with the cultivators here.

His opponent didn't say a single word in response. He smiled coldly, as if he believed that speaking to Meng Hao would sully his own mouth. He performed an incantation gesture, and the air behind him rippled as a huge red hand appeared. Shocking ripples spread out as the hand shot toward Meng Hao.

The man's cultivation base exploded with power. Despite being suppressed somewhat due to being in the Ninth Sea, it was still incredibly shocking. His killing intent was also incredibly intense.

"Fellow Daoist," said Meng Hao, falling back further, his frown deepening. "Please inform me as to exactly what has happened. If you want to try to kill me, you must at least give a reason."

However, the middle-aged man didn't slow down at all. He advanced, waving his hand, causing the scale on his forehead to glitter. Instantly, he was surrounded by over a thousand fish scales, all of which glittered with cold light as they screamed toward Meng Hao in the form of a windstorm.

"Scale Slaughtering!" the man said coldly, his killing intent continuing to rise up. Apparently he wanted to slice Meng Hao into tens of thousands of pieces.

Meng Hao was so enraged that a smile broke out on his face. After arriving at the Ninth Sea, he had instantly been treated as an enemy, for inexplicable reasons. Then he got to the Nine Seas God World, and the Demonic cultivators there treated him even worse.

To put it rather bluntly, Meng Hao was the type of person to defy laws

and principles, even of the Heavens. His was the Dao of freedom, something that could not accept outside fetters or grievances. Although he was retreating from his opponent, that opponent was not holding back, and was instead more intent on killing him.

“Give them an inch and they take a mile!” thought Meng Hao, his face darkening. He stopped moving backward, and instead took a step forward. He allowed the fish scales to close in on him, and to slam into his body.

Clanging sounds could be heard, and numerous disciples of the Nine Seas God World stared in shock as the fish scales did absolutely nothing whatsoever to Meng Hao. In fact, many of them shattered under the backlash of striking him.

Meng Hao’s eyes glowed coldly as he took three steps forward. A massive windstorm sprang up, and as the nine loach swords closed in on him, he lifted his right hand and struck out with a palm.

The nine swords immediately began to tremble.

“Scram!” he said calmly. That one word transformed into nine claps of thunder that sent the nine loach swords spinning away, after which they exploded.

An unmatched energy exploded up from Meng Hao, causing his opponent’s face to fall. Blood oozed out of the man’s mouth as he was forced backward by the energy attack. However, he clenched his jaw and once again performed an incantation gesture. At the same time, Meng Hao snorted coldly, waving his right hand to summon a Blood Demon head. Although his cultivation base was somewhat suppressed, he was still incredibly powerful within the Immortal Realm. He waved his hand, causing the Blood Demon head to roar, a roar which caused the blood of many surrounding cultivators to shiver beyond their control, as if it wanted to rush out of their bodies.

The ferocious Blood Demon head shot forward toward the middle-aged man, who instantly fell backward, his facial expression flickering as an intense sensation of deadly crisis rose up in him. He had the powerful feeling that if he was even the slightest bit too slow, he would be dead.

Unfortunately, his speed obviously didn't match up to that of the Blood Demon head, which was instantly on top of him. The man's expression was despondent, and his eyes glittered with hatred as he screamed, "Why haven't all of you attacked yet!?"

Immediately, a dozen or so of the surrounding Demonic cultivators stepped forward, cultivation bases surging as they attacked the Blood Demon head.

There were even more who let out bellows of rage and shot toward Meng Hao. Fully a hundred Demonic cultivators all attacked simultaneously. Killing intent was like a flood that exploded out, causing that area of the Nine Seas God World to seem like it had descended into a chaotic riot.

All of the non-Demonic cultivator disciples of the Nine Seas God World looked on with flickering faces, and some began stepping forward to stop the fighting.

However, Meng Hao unexpectedly smiled, a smile filled with killing intent. He opted to stop trying to figure out why all this was happening; after all, his opponent had tried to kill him, and therefore... things were now simple. That man would die!

This was Meng Hao's chance... to establish his place in the Nine Seas God World!

His eyes flickered coldly as he suddenly raised his hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced, and a huge boom could be heard as he suddenly switched places with another of the Demonic cultivators next to his middle-aged opponent.

The man's face fell in shock and alarm as Meng Hao reached out and tapped his finger toward his forehead.

That single finger surged with a murderous aura, and it was obvious that if he touched the middle-aged man, he would be instantly killed in body and soul, dead beyond the shadow of a doubt.

At that point, an enraged voice shouted out from off in the distance.

"How presumptuous!!"

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, almost as if he hadn't heard the voice. His finger continued to descend until it landed on the man's forehead. A boom rang out... and the man trembled violently. His meridians were shattered, and his body exploded into a cloud of gore. Meng Hao waved his hand, dispersing the blood, then turned to face the newcomer.

"Do you mean that I'm being presumptuous, or that he was?" he asked coldly.

Chapter 1038: I Promise Not to Kill You!

In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, surrounded by a crowd of Demonic cultivators, he killed his opponent with precision and determination!

The surrounding cultivators of the Nine Seas God World looked on with shock, and the Demonic cultivators' eyes narrowed. Everyone was astonished by Meng Hao's lightning-like attack.

For countless years, it was extremely rare for a Nine Seas God World disciple to have been attacked and killed within the Nine Seas God World itself. Even during the insurrection caused when the Ji Clan sleeper cells revealed themselves among the forces of the Three Great Daoist Societies, all they did was sow chaos.

As for Meng Hao, although he was technically a disciple of the Nine Seas God World, the other cultivators hadn't approved of him yet, and essentially viewed him as an outsider.

His methods were vicious, and he attacked to kill. Then he simply waved away the resulting cloud of blood, leaving the cultivators of the Nine Seas God World completely stunned.

When Meng Hao turned and spoke, his words echoed out into the ears of everyone present. All disciples, both Demonic cultivators and regular disciples, could clearly hear them, and could sense the domineering arrogance within them.

They sounded like words intended to defy laws and principles, even those of the Heavens. As of that moment, everyone was left with a deep impression of Meng Hao.

At the same time, a bellow of rage echoed out from off in the distance. Meng Hao's eyes were cold as he watched a black-robed old man approaching. He strode through the air, bristling with rage, cultivation base surging. Shockingly, an enormous illusory image could be seen behind him.

The image was that of a Sea Dragon, pitch black with four sets of razor-sharp talons. Its whiskers were long, and floated around its head, making it look especially vicious as it glared at Meng Hao with cold eyes. A wild wind kicked up, disturbing the energy of Heaven and Earth in the area.

As for the old man, at first glance he looked like a cultivator, except that on his forehead there was a black fish scale. Furthermore, two black, coiled horns grew out of the top of his head, which radiated a flickering glow that made him seem terrifyingly powerful.

“You ruthless rascal! How dare you act presumptuously in the Nine Seas God World!” he said, his voice ancient and thunderous. The sound of his voice turned into massive pressure which crushed down toward Meng Hao.

Even more shocking, Soul Lamps began to swirl around him, five of which were extinguished.

“That’s Elder Hai Sheng!”

“Greetings, Elder Hai Sheng!” The old man’s appearance on the scene immediately energized the Demonic cultivators, all of whom offered greetings. The old man ignored them, and focused completely on Meng Hao. As he approached, killing intent swirled around him, a will of hatred that seemed to ooze out from his bones, as if he couldn’t bear to live under the same sky as Meng Hao.

As he closed in on Meng Hao, he didn’t hesitate for even a moment. Ignoring the surrounding Demonic cultivators, he stretched his right hand out and made a clawing motion. The Sea Dragon behind him roared, then shot past him, flying gracefully toward Meng Hao and then slashing at him with its claws.

It was a vicious attack filled with killing intent, clearly designed to rip him to pieces.

The claws even seemed to embody natural law, as if they could borrow from the power of the Ninth Sea itself. It transformed into a sealing mark which caused everything in the area to shake. The seafloor quaked, and boundless ripples spread out.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly as a sense of crisis filled him. Shockingly, he transformed into a golden roc, which let out a piercing cry as it shot toward the Sea Dragon.

Moments later, the roc and the dragon collided, and a huge boom echoed out.

That one interchange caused Meng Hao in golden roc-form to spit out a mouthful of blood, increasing his speed rapidly to evade the first slash of the Sea Dragon's claws.

As he retreated, the Sea Dragon swept its mighty tail toward Meng Hao, ripping the air violently as it neared him.

If that tail strike landed on Meng Hao, it wouldn't matter that he had a true Immortal fleshly body. If he wasn't killed, then at the least, he would be seriously injured. After all, this was the attack of an Ancient Realm cultivator with five extinguished soul lamps.

All of this takes some time to describe, but occurred in only a brief moment. The tail, filled with bursting power, was just about to slam into Meng Hao. Meng Hao, face grim, transformed back from a golden roc into human-form, then waved his right hand. Instantly, buzzing filled the air as 500 black beetles appeared in front of him, using their backs to form a huge shield.

BOOOOMMMMMM!

The tail smacked into the black beetle shield, which trembled violently and then collapsed into 500 parts. However, despite being dispersed by the blow... the force of the blow had been split amongst the black beetles such that not a single one was killed.

With the help of the black beetles, Meng Hao retreated roughly 3,000 meters. Waving his right hand, he caused the 500 black beetles to swirl around him as the illusory Sea Dragon prepared a second slashing attack.

The speed of the attack caused the surrounding disciples of the Nine Seas God World to gasp. They could never have imagined that Meng Hao, who had an Immortal Realm cultivation base, could fight back against the

attack of an Ancient Realm Elder.

The black-robed old man frowned, and his killing intent grew more intense as he advanced again.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he glared at the old man. His Ancient Realm cultivation base was not ordinary. However, they were still at the bottom of the sea. If they were outside, he would be even more powerful.

Meng Hao had his speculations that if he successfully absorbed his own Nirvana Fruits, the explosive power of his Immortal Realm cultivation base might be strong enough to fight back. However... that would only be if the Ninth Sea wasn't suppressing his cultivation base.

His eyes glittered, and as the pressure from the old man crushed down on him, he snorted coldly. However, he did not retreat. Instead, he took a step forward, then spoke out, his voice booming, "Presumptuous!?"

"I, Meng Hao, am a conclave disciple of the Nine Seas God World! After returning to my own sect, I was inexplicably attacked! You, an Elder, didn't even stop to inquire about who was in the wrong, but instead attacked with deadly force. And you say that I'm presumptuous!?"

"The person I killed was the presumptuous one! I'm a member of the Fang Clan, a disciple of all of the Three Great Daoist Societies! He wanted to kill me? I bet he was actually an agent of the Ji Clan!

"I heard that not too long ago, the Ji Clan had sleeper cells in the Three Great Daoist Societies that sowed a lot of chaos. That man must have been a cultivator of the Ji Clan!

"He attacked me impulsively, and then even called on a bunch of accessories to aid in his treason! Killing me would earn him a lot of credit in the Ji Clan! Killing me would destroy the reputation of the Daoist Societies! Killing me would accomplish his mission!" Meng Hao's words were as sharp as daggers. With each sentence he spoke, he took a step forward, taking every opportunity to embellish his words, trumping up the gravity of the situation.

When the surrounding Demonic cultivators heard his words ring out,

they were instantly enraged, and began to shout out angrily.

“YOU!!”

“You’re shameless! SLANDERER!!”

“He wasn’t a Ji Clan agent, and we definitely aren’t accessories to treason!” Their killing intent grew even stronger, as if they wanted to chomp Meng Hao up and swallow him. Some of the more irascible ones clenched their fists and began to walk forward.

As for the ordinary cultivators, they looked hesitant. Quite a few had already pressed down on jade slips to notify Elders within the sect. The disturbance was also attracting the attention of disciples from other areas in the sect, who were now flying over to watch the events play out.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever, but inwardly, he was laughing coldly. When it came to battles of oratorical wit, he had never been defeated. Not in the Violet Fate Sect, not on Planet South Heaven as large, and not in the Fang Clan. It would be impossible to say how many people would grudgingly describe him as sharp-tongued.

“If you’re not from the Ji Clan, then why would attack me as soon as you saw me?!” he retorted, glancing around coldly at all the infuriated Demonic cultivators. Then he turned to the black-robed old man and coolly said, “And now, you even have an Elder joining you! It’s a classic case of the big bullying the small! Elder Hai Sheng, could it be that you want to start your own version of the torture chamber right here!? You want to use the greater power of your Ancient Realm cultivation base to kill me?”

“That’s because you–” The Demonic cultivators’ eyes went bright red, but before they could finish responding, Elder Hai Sheng gave a cold harrumph, and his expression became incredibly dark. Meng Hao was speaking very loudly, causing his voice to boom out in all directions and attract a lot of attention. Elder Hai Sheng wanted to attack him, but didn’t dare to be so obvious. Therefore he could only secretly wallow in his fury that Meng Hao had blocked his previous two attacks.

When he spoke, his voice was like thunder, pushing down oppressively

on everyone in the area:

“It doesn’t matter what happened. Killing people here cannot be tolerated. Men, arrest him and take him to the sect court to be held accountable!” Elder Hai Sheng could see that the crowd was only growing larger, making it impossible for him to attack Meng Hao again. He knew that, as of now, it would be impossible to kill him. Inwardly, however, he was sneering coldly.

He looked at Meng Hao, flicked his sleeve, and thought, “I might not be able to kill you this day, but I will most certainly humiliate you! Your reputation among the disciples of the Three Great Daoist Societies will be ruined! Furthermore, this will ensure that all other powers in the Nine Seas God World know that our Demonic Cultivator Horde and YOU... are irreconcilable enemies! With the Demonic cultivators taking the initiative, more and more people will be unable to suppress their ill feelings, causing more trouble for you!

“That way, you will only find yourself facing more and more enemies in the Nine Seas God World! Even if the Grand Elders and Patriarchs approve of you, they are not your Dao protectors. Eventually, sooner or later, it will reach a point where... you’ll definitely die here!

“That is the only way to give vent to the blood enmity that exists between us! That is the only way that we Nine Seas God World Demonic cultivators can ease the stench of your vile aura!

“And if you want to know the reason why... well, too bad! I’m not going to tell you!” Elder Hai Sheng’s face was as cold as ice, and his eyes were shot with blood, causing Meng Hao’s heart to sink.

Meng Hao was still trying to figure out why all of this was happening, but he couldn’t be certain. What exactly was it that had caused such deep-seated enmity between him and the Demonic cultivators?

“Is it the spirit-immortal stones? Or perhaps me being part of the League of Demon Sealers? Or maybe me showing up here threatens the interest of some unknown party? An old foe of the Fang Clan?” Meng Hao felt a headache coming on. Even after pondering the matter from every

angle, he was still perplexed about the situation. After Elder Hai Sheng finished speaking, seven or eight disciples flew through the air toward Meng Hao, killing intent seething.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly. He had already started killing people, so he didn't mind killing a few more. Although... if he could get some more promissory notes, that would be even better!

"Since they're not going to provide any explanation," he thought, "I'll just force them to owe me more money than they'll ever be able to pay back!

"Furthermore, I can't believe that this disturbance has gone unnoticed by those old fogies of the Nine Seas God World. They have to know what's happening!" He was irritated, and seeing how much the Demonic cultivators wanted to kill him, he found the whole situation to be very annoying.

"Don't you worry. As long as you do what I say, I won't beat you to death!" he said coolly. Lifting his left hand, he caused tens of thousands of mountains to crush down from above.

Chapter 1039: I Have Proof!

Of the eight Demonic cultivators, three were female. They were extremely beautiful and charming, as it seemed most female Demonic cultivators were. Despite the murderous looks that currently warped their faces, they were extremely attractive.

Although they all had various body parts that clearly belonged to sea beasts, that wasn't distracting, and if anything, enhanced their beauty.

The rest of the male Demonic cultivators were all equally handsome.

Currently, all eight of these Demonic cultivators were now closing in on Meng Hao.

His eyes glittered as he waved his right hand, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as the Mountain Consuming Incantation materialized into the form of a mountain chain which crushed down onto the incoming cultivators.

The eight Demonic cultivators were prepared, however. Echoing booms rang out as they performed incantation gestures, causing Immortal qi to surge out. Each and every one was in the Immortal Realm, although none were true Immortals; they were all false Immortals. They fought back against the mountain chain with divine abilities and magical techniques, as well as with their Dharma Idols.

Booms rang out in all directions. All of these Demonic cultivators were at the peak of the Immortal Realm. It was with cold harrumphs that they fought back against the Mountain Consuming Incantation, causing the mountain chain to collapse. Furthermore, they arranged themselves in a magical formation, allowing them to swap locations and increase the power of their divine abilities. In the blink of an eye, the Mountain Consuming Incantation's mountain range collapsed into pieces.

The eight Demonic cultivators continued to charge forward, led by a beautiful woman who had no scales at all, and looked almost exactly like a normal cultivator. The only difference was that she stood inside of a gigantic shell that was far larger than her own person.

She moved with incredible speed, nearing Meng Hao, eyes flickering with killing intent. She lifted her hand to reveal, shockingly, a beautiful pearl, which was emanating glittering light.

“Solidify!” she said. Although her voice was beautiful, it instantly caused the surroundings to grow colder.

The glittering light of the pearl emanated strange power as it threatened to lock down Meng Hao.

His eyes shone with a bizarre light as he lifted his right hand in response, then pointed up into the air.

“A Writ of Karma!” Instantly, black and white light appeared on his hand, which transformed into threads that shot out. Simultaneously, Karma Threads appeared over his head.

Almost as soon as the Karma Threads appeared, Meng Hao took a step forward. Instantly, he was directly in front of the shelled female Demonic cultivator. Her expression flickered as Meng Hao’s hand reached out to tap her forehead.

The woman’s face fell as an intense sensation of crisis rose up in her heart, and her shell rapidly snapped shut to protect her.

However, Meng Hao snorted coldly, which shook her mentally and sent her cultivation base into chaos. The shell stopped in place, and Meng Hao’s finger shot into the shell like lightning to land directly onto the female Demonic cultivator’s forehead.

It was a light touch, but it was enough to bind her Karma Threads. He lifted his hand up and tied the Karma Threads that no outsider could see into a knot, linking them together. The knot then turned into a brilliant light in the middle of his palm, which was then transformed by the magical technique into a promissory note!

The female Demonic cultivator’s body trembled, and she felt as if something inside of her had been taken away without her volition. Shocked, she tried to retreat, but it took only the blink of an eye for Meng Hao to wave his hand, causing a wild wind to sweep over her. Her body

was beyond her own control as she was grabbed by Meng Hao, sealed, and stuffed into his bag of holding.

“It worked!” he thought, falling back and taking a moment to examine the Demonic cultivator he had just captured. His eyes rapidly began to glow even brighter. “Demonic cultivators are great! I can sell them off as pets or even mounts. Anything people will buy!

“Their entire bodies are treasures; I could carve out random chunks if I wanted and refine them into qi and blood medicinal pills. That giant shell also has a Demon heart!!

“Excellent. Excellent. This is much better than all that seafood from the Milky Way Sea.” Meng Hao appeared to be delighted. As far as he was concerned, if the Demonic cultivators viewed him as an enemy, then he might as well treat them as seafood. All of a sudden, he felt intense regret.

“Dammit, I shouldn’t have killed that one earlier!” Even in his moment of pain, his body flickered to appear in front of one of the other Demonic cultivators. This time, it was a man whose back stuck out so far it almost looked like a camel. Actually, it was no hump, but a turtle shell. Shockingly, this Demonic cultivator had started practicing cultivation as a turtle!

“I hate damned turtles most of all!” Meng Hao murmured. The Demonic cultivator’s face fell, and Meng Hao extended his right hand. A Writ of Karma appeared again, along with intense rumbling sounds, as he forced ties of destiny. The Demonic cultivator trembled and tried to flee, but Meng Hao instantly caused a huge hand to appear and snatch toward him.

The Star Plucking Magic rotated as he grabbed the man, sealed him, and stashed him away.

He moved with incredible speed, following the same pattern. In a very short period of time, he had captured four Demonic cultivators!

This scene caused the surrounding disciples to stare with wide eyes.

“What is he doing?”

“Oh, I remember. This Meng Hao has a strange hobby of getting people

to write promissory notes. He even created a divine ability that can... can force people to be tied to him via Karma!!”

“He just captured Junior Brother Jin and Junior Sister Shui!”

As for the Demonic cultivators, when they saw what was happening, they were enraged. Roars of fury could be heard as dozens of them charged toward Meng Hao.

Apparently, Meng Hao’s actions spurred all of the Demonic cultivators into a rage. After the first dozen charged him, they were followed by hundreds more, all of whom flew into the air straight toward him.

Elder Hai Shen’s eyes were bright red, as if new hatreds were being piled onto old ones. Gritting his teeth, he was just about to attack when, all of a sudden, he stopped in place and remained silent.

Even if he didn’t attack, there were hundreds of Demonic cultivators attacking. Even though they were all false Immortals, there were hundreds of them attacking at the same time, an attack that even an Ancient Realm cultivator would be forced to avoid. Energy surged, shocking magical techniques were unleashed, and killing intent filled the area.

Meng Hao might be powerful, but the sight of it caused even his scalp to tingle. He grabbed a fifth Demonic cultivator, and then began to back up. The man struggled and howled, but Meng Hao quickly sealed him and continued to retreat.

BOOM!

The place he had just been standing in shattered. Ripples spread out, and hundreds of Demonic cultivators continued chasing Meng Hao with frenzied attacks.

“Damn those old farts from the Nine Seas God World!” Meng Hao thought. “Why haven’t they shown up yet!?” He backed up under the onslaught of hundreds of maddened Demonic cultivators, sure that the old bastards were currently watching the spectacle from the sidelines.

“I killed someone before, and they still didn’t make an appearance....” he thought as he backed up. Finally, he snorted coldly.

“Well, I was in the right. If something really bad happens, the old fogies will have to take responsibility. In that case... I’m going to force them to show their faces!” Eyes flickering, he raised his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron.

He might fear the combined attacks of all of the Demonic cultivators, but in truth, Meng Hao wasn’t the least bit frightened of fighting outnumbered. In fact, as long as he was careful, such large-scale fighting was the best type of battlefield for him.

Electricity danced, and a rumbling sound could be heard as he vanished. When he reappeared, he was right in the middle of all the Demonic cultivators, having switched places with one of their number. In the moment that he fully appeared, and before anyone could react, he reached his hand out and shoved out forcefully. A Demonic cultivator whose body was half covered with scales had its Karma tied up, and was captured.

Next, the flash of lightning could once again be seen, and Meng Hao disappeared. He showed up in another location, causing the Demonic cultivators to roar in frustration. Meng Hao was like a loach, virtually impossible to pin down. No matter how much force the Demonic cultivators used in their attacks, they were never able to keep Meng Hao in one place.

Of course, in all the chaos, Meng Hao received some injuries. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and yet, his eyes shone as brightly as ever. Often, it would only take one flash of light before he had captured yet another Demonic cultivator.

10. 15. 20....

Not much time passed before Meng Hao had captured over 30 Demonic cultivators. Finally, there was someone who couldn’t endure the situation any longer. A cold snort echoed out from the very depths of the Nine Seas God World.

It was accompanied by Heaven-shaking, Earth-rocking pressure, a pressure which changed natural law and caused the entire Ninth Sea to seethe and roar.

When that sound echoed out, Meng Hao's face fell. Shocking pressure rumbled down as a giant finger materialized in midair, which then pushed down toward Meng Hao.

Essence aura also roiled out.

"Dao Realm!" Meng Hao's eyes went wide. He had absolutely no way to fight back against the terrifying might of the Dao Realm. However, almost as soon as the finger appeared, a dry cough echoed out.

At long last, the old-timers from the Nine Seas God World couldn't sit still any longer. The dry cough echoed out to cover everything, transforming into a mighty pressure that prevented all of the Demonic cultivators from attacking.

An old man appeared out of thin air. A single step forward, and he was in front of the giant finger that was pushing down toward Meng Hao. He waved his hand out to touch the finger.

Rumbling echoed out in all directions as the hand and the finger made contact. The finger trembled and then faded away. As for the old man, he staggered backward a few paces, his face a mass of white and red lines, as if his qi and blood were in chaos.

"Elder Brother Wu, there's no reason to act thus," said the old man. Meng Hao immediately recognized him! It was none other than Ling Yunzi! He wasn't the only one to appear. He was followed by seven or eight disciples of the Nine Seas God World, including Fan Dong'er.

She looked coldly at Meng Hao, inwardly rejoicing at his misfortune.

As soon as Ling Yunzi showed up, all of the disciples of the Nine Seas God World clasped hands and bowed. Even the black-robed Elder Hai Sheng bowed his head.

At this point, a cold and ancient voice echoed out in all directions, replying to Ling Yunzi: "He killed a member of my Demonic Cultivator Horde!"

"Meng Hao didn't attack first," answered Ling Yunzi slowly. "In fact, he evaded twice. Any member of the sect who attacks a conclave disciple has

committed a grave offense that cannot be absolved even if they are killed in the counterattack. Even if he had not died, he would have been immediately expelled from the sect.”

“I didn’t see any of my Demonic cultivators attack of their own initiative,” replied the cold, ancient voice. “I just saw this kid killing my people. Furthermore, he captured 33 disciples of my Demonic Cultivator Horde. Shouldn’t he immediately set them free?!”

This time, Meng Hao didn’t wait for Ling Yunzi to respond. He wasn’t worried about causing a huge ruckus. After all, he was the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, and was a disciple of all of the Three Great Daoist Societies. If the Nine Seas God World allowed anything unfortunate to happen, it would cause a massive conflict within the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Therefore, full of confidence and courage, he flickered to appear next to Ling Yunzi, then cried, “Those 33 seafood dishes owed me money. HUGE amounts of spirit stones! They can’t pay me back, so they sold themselves to me to pay off the debt! I have PROOF!!” Even as he spoke, he lifted up his hand, within which were a stack of promissory note formed by A Writ of Karma. 1

*

Note from Er Gen: Uh... I feel like eating seafood.

Note from Deathblade: I don’t particularly feel like eating seafood, although there’s a pretty high-end buffet near my house that has unlimited king crab legs. Okay I changed my mind, I feel like eating seafood!

*

1. The references to seafood in this and later chapters are pretty funny. The second character of the word seafood is a complete homophone for the word “Immortal.” Therefore, when spoken, the word would sound like “Sea Immortal.” However, it would equally sound like

“seafood,” which is a really common word. I will go back and forth between “seafood” and “seafood dish” when translating this term, because “seafood” is an uncountable noun and “seafood dish” is a countable noun. Countable and uncountable nouns do not exist in Chinese, making it difficult to stick with one or the other in certain situations. By the way, the original Chinese characters are consistently 海鲜 (seafood) not 海仙 (sea immortal).

Chapter 1040: Don't Provoke Me!

Ling Yunzi gaped in response to Meng Hao's words. The other disciples of the Nine Seas God World behind him also stared with wide eyes. Fan Dong'er gasped.

The other cultivators in the area felt their jaws drop and their minds reel. All of that was because Meng Hao had said the words... seafood.

Simultaneously, the surrounding Demonic cultivators' eyes went bright red, and their desire to kill rocketed up, transforming into a tempest within the Nine Seas God World.

"He actually dared to call us seafood? He MUST be killed!!"

"Kill him NOW! I haven't eaten a cultivator for a long time, and I want to eat HIM!!" Roaring sounds raged up into the air, echoing out in all directions.

Meng Hao laughed coldly, and his expression was the same as ever. His words had been uttered intentionally, of course. He did not believe for a moment that if he spoke politely, the Demonic cultivators would suddenly stop viewing him as an enemy that needed to be killed.

For whatever reason, they hated him and wanted him dead, a situation that didn't seem possible to resolve. Therefore, since he didn't have the power to fight back physically, he would use fatally destructive words as his weapon.

Sometimes, the power of one's words were of more use than the strength of one's cultivation base.

For example, calling the Demonic cultivators 'seafood dishes' was something that no other person would dare to do. In fact, because of the history and roots of the Nine Seas God World, it was most likely a term that no one had even thought to associate with the Demonic cultivators. However, Meng Hao said it, and the words echoed out for everyone to hear.

On many occasions a single sentence, or even just two words, can

completely change the situation.

A perfect example was this very moment, in which the non-Demonic cultivators of the Nine Seas God World were looking around with strange expressions on their faces. Normally speaking, they viewed the Demonic cultivators as fellow sect disciples, but right now, when they looked at them, they couldn't help but think about seafood.

"Lies upon more lies!" raged the ancient voice. Massive killing intent bore down, materializing into a huge hand that rumbled down toward Meng Hao.

From the look of it, that hand was capable of completely crushing the entire land. As it descended, the air shattered, and natural law collapsed. It was as if the fury of the Heavens were crushing down, causing Ling Yunzi's face to flicker. At this point, a soft sigh echoed out as an old woman appeared in midair. She waved her finger toward the huge hand, causing the hand to collapse, whereupon it transformed into a huge tentacle. A muffled grunt echoed out, but the tentacle didn't fade away. Instead, it swerved around the old woman and continued on toward Meng Hao.

The old woman did nothing to intervene this time. She merely said, "Enough, Junior Brother Wu. You know how important Meng Hao is. Don't force me to damage our friendship."

As she spoke, a stream of divine sense shot out from thin air. Although no physical body was present, the aura of the Dao Realm appeared, radiating intense pressure. The threatening nature of the aura was plainly evident.

This aura merged with those of the old woman and Ling Yunzi, creating a towering energy that swept out in all directions, causing all the surrounding regions of the Ninth Sea to seethe.

Almost as soon as the stream of divine sense appeared, a second stream of divine sense also exploded out from within the depths of the Nine Seas God World. This divine sense radiated a sense of madness and ferocity, and was filled with Demonic qi. This was clearly a Dao Realm Demonic

cultivator!

However, even with that divine sense merging with that of the cultivator named Wu, they were no match for the old woman's faction.

Things weren't over yet, though. Almost as soon as the Dao Realm aura appeared, two more Dao Realm auras appeared from two different directions. The streams of surging energy actually formed into four factional powers.

The tentacle paused in midair, as if they all were now in the middle of a standoff.

The surrounding disciples of the Nine Seas God World looked on with flickering faces. Neither Demonic nor non-Demonic cultivators could ever have imagined that they would be witnessing a shocking scene like this.

There were only a few disciples who watched with glittering eyes; clearly, they were already aware of the complex nature of the relationships between the various factions within the Nine Seas God World.

Meng Hao's eyes widened. This brief probing on his part had already revealed the depth and caliber of the Nine Seas God World.

"I can't believe they have seven Dao Realm experts! They definitely deserve to be one of the Three Great Daoist Societies!" Meng Hao's mind trembled. He could now see that the faction represented by the old woman was the strongest within the Nine Seas God World. That was also the same faction which had insisted on accepting him as a disciple.

After a long moment, the archaic voice echoed out from within the tentacle, cold and filled with killing intent: "We can forget about the person he killed. If he just hands over my disciples that were captured, and kowtows to admit his wrongdoing, then we can put the matter to rest."

The old woman frowned. As far as she was concerned, handing over the captured Demonic cultivators would be fine. However, the matter of kowtowing to admit fault was a bit excessive. She was just about to open her mouth to respond, when Meng Hao began to laugh.

"Put the matter to rest? After arriving in the Ninth Sea, I was hunted

murderously by numerous seafood dishes! Then I arrived at the Nine Seas God World, and even more seafood inexplicably attacked me! There was even one seafood dish which tried to kill me!

“After I killed him, an old seafood dish shamelessly used his Ancient Realm cultivation base to try to murder me!

“After that, a whole army of mini-seafood dishes joined forces to attack me! Then in the end, in an unbelievable turn of events, a Dao Realm expert actually tried to make a move on me! Even I have limits to my patience! You think you can just put the matter to rest? Like hell we can put it to rest!” Meng Hao’s wording was sharp and incisive, his voice cold.

As soon as the words left his mouth, the surrounding disciples frowned. Many of them believed Meng Hao to be ignorant of the height of the Heavens and the depth of the Earth. His voice didn’t match up at all to that of an almighty member of the Dao Realm.

As for the Demonic cultivators, they began to chuckle coldly, believing Meng Hao to have vastly overestimated himself.

“Screw off! You don’t qualify to speak in this situation!” said the ancient voice, which echoed about like thunder.

Even though Meng Hao stood next to Ling Yunzi, blood began oozing out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth due to the vibrations of the voice. However, his expression was one of ferocity as he threw his head back and laughed.

“I’m not qualified?

“I’m the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, and in the future I’ll certainly be the Clan Chief. The Fang Clan has Fang Shoudao, the Earth Patriarch, along with Patriarch Yanxu, AND the first generation Patriarch. In the battle of Planet East Victory, they cut down Dao Realm experts as easily as slaughtering chickens. You want me to kowtow to you? That’s like having the whole Fang Clan kowtow to you! Even if I did kowtow, would you dare to accept it?!”

His words echoed out like thunder into all ears. Even the owner of that

ancient voice, who had not appeared in person, but remained hidden in secluded meditation, was speechless.

He could afford to disregard Meng Hao, but he couldn't afford to disregard the Fang Clan. That was especially true after the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan put on such a display of might in the battle of Planet East Victory, and had even cowed the Ji Clan into retreat. How could he even compare?

This Dao Realm expert had personally witnessed the first generation Patriarch on the attack, and it left his scalp numb and mind spinning. Suddenly, the legends about the Fang Clan's first generation Patriarch all seemed to rise up into his mind.

He was from a generation of fierce experts, a contemporary of Ji Tian. According to the legends, in the great war in which Lord Ji became the Heavens, the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan was the number one killer, bathing the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea in blood!

However, Meng Hao wasn't finished yet!

"By the way, I'm not just a disciple of the Nine Seas God World. I'm also a conclave disciple of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, AND the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto! Did you ask the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto whether or not you could mess with me!?"

"You want me, their conclave disciple, to kowtow? That's the same as having the entire Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite and the entire Sublime Flow Sword Grotto kowtow to you! Well then, let me ask you the same thing as before. If I did kowtow, would you dare to accept it?"

As Meng Hao's words echoed out, Ling Yunzi stood there silently. As for the old woman, she smiled slightly. She had been planning to interfere in the matter, but now, it seemed there was no need to do anything. Her eyes glowed with amusement as she watched Meng Hao.

As for the old Dao Realm expert who represented the Demonic Cultivator Horde, he continued to hesitate.

"Do you think your crappy Seafood Horde is the only power structure

among all the Three Great Daoist Societies?

“You think I don’t qualify? Well then let me ask you, who DOES qualify?”

“If you don’t give me an explanation right now, do you really think that the Fang Clan, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, and these Elder Patriarchs of the God World, couldn’t completely wipe out your Seafood Horde?” Meng Hao’s voice grew clearer and clearer, his wording sharper and more incisive. All of the surrounding disciples were gasping, and the faces of the Demonic cultivators fell.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was now the center of attention of all of the Nine Seas God World.

He stood there, jaw tilted up, his domineering will raging for all to see.

“You know what? I don’t even need to call on all those people to help. If you say the word ‘kowitz’ one more time, how much are you willing to bet that I won’t crush this jade slip and summon the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan himself to slaughter you where you stand?!” With that, Meng Hao held a jade slip aloft for everyone to see.

His words immediately caused an uproar. Not only did the faces of Ling Yunzi and the old woman flicker, so did the faces of the two Dao Realm Patriarchs from the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

The other two almighty Dao Realm experts from the other power factions were equally shaken. As of this moment, Meng Hao’s words were absolutely the most powerful weapon he could possibly wield.

“I know you’re probably wondering if I’m bluffing. Well let me explain it to your sorry ass: My first generation Patriarch personally gave me this jade slip, and then promised to appear at my side at any time, because I’m the successor of the One Thought Stellar Transformation!

“I’m also the only one in the Fang Clan to ever successfully concoct the first generation Patriarch’s three Holy pills!

“Plus, I did something that almost no one else has ever done! I corroborated the Dao on my own, and I opened the maximum possible 123 meridians!

“And in fact, I’m also... in the Echelon!”

Meng Hao listed out one fact after another. The result was dead silence that lasted only for a moment before complete tumult took over. For all the years that the Nine Seas God World had existed, Meng Hao was the first person to ever excoriate a Dao Realm expert!

Furthermore, his venomous words were like a sharp sword; anyone who heard them would feel their mind rumbling.

Meng Hao had decided he might as well go all out with his words, in much the same manner as he had killed the Demonic cultivator earlier. He wanted to firmly establish his position among the various factions in the Nine Seas God World, with their complex relationships.

He didn’t just want to unnerve the ordinary disciples, he wanted to awe the almighty Dao Realm experts. His words contained nothing truly secret; the Dao Realm experts could easily do some investigating and confirm the truth of what he was saying.

One of the reasons he wanted to establish his position in this way was that he did not intend to stay in the Nine Seas God World for very long. Therefore, the more domineering he could make himself, the easier and smoother things would be. Instead of starting out by being bullied, he would unsheathe his sword, making himself a giant mass of bristling spikes!

As far as whether or not people believed everything he said, that didn’t matter. The important thing was that they knew that he was important to the Fang Clan, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. That would be enough.

Amidst the uproar, the tentacle up in midair suddenly vanished. A cold harrumph echoed out, but was accompanied by no words. The two Dao Realm auras from the Demonic Cultivator Horde vanished.

In that moment, the two other almighty Dao Realm auras from the other two factions stared deeply at Meng Hao, and then slowly faded away.

Just as Meng Hao had guessed, the truth of his words weren’t important.

Everyone could now see how deeply he was backed by the powerful forces in Ninth Mountain and Sea, and also understood the main point of all of his words.

Don't provoke me!

Chapter 1041: The Origin

Don't provoke me!

Meng Hao didn't actually speak the words, but based on everything he had said, the message to all his enemies was clear:

Don't provoke me!

If you do, be prepared to deal with the consequences!

Today, I killed one Demonic cultivator and captured 33 more. Well then... if you dare to provoke me tomorrow, then I'll do the same thing. And if you push me even further, then I'll flip the table over and really cause a scene.

The streams of Dao Realm divine sense faded away. Meng Hao's first day in the Nine Seas God World was a day in which his name spread throughout the entire sect. All disciples heard about what happened, leaving them with a profound impression.

Fan Dong'er looked deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, but didn't say anything. Her expression from earlier, in which she was rejoicing in his misfortune, was completely gone. Now, her fear of him was even more deeply rooted.

The Demonic cultivators' hatred was still there, but Meng Hao had established his position in the sect. He still wasn't sure why they hated him so much, but it didn't matter; he had already secured his position. There wasn't a single Demonic cultivator in the entire sect who would dare to make a move against him.

No one in the Immortal Realm was his match. He had castigated the Ancient Realm, and even the Dao Realm was intimidated by him. The glorious scene in which he revealed his terrifying background caused the Demonic cultivators to not only fear him, but to also be jealous of him, and to curse his arrogant and despotic display.

Ling Yunzi left with Meng Hao in tow. The rest of the cultivators gradually dispersed. When Meng Hao's vision cleared, he was in a

mountain range deep in the Nine Seas God World.

His current location was a mountain, the top half of which was covered with snow; the frigid cold was evidence of the strength of the energy of Heaven and Earth here. Despite the Nine Seas God World being at the bottom of the sea, the entire land mass was surrounded by a huge invisible shield which kept the seawater out. However, the massive pressure exerted by the Ninth Sea was still there.

At the top of the mountain was a temple, which was where Ling Yunzi was taking Meng Hao. As soon as he entered, he saw that there were two other people sitting there cross-legged.

One of them was the old woman from earlier. She wore a long gray robe, and her face was a mass of wrinkles. Her hair was long and white, and her expression archaic, as if she had existed for many, many years. Her eyes sparkled with a wisdom that seemed to indicate that she could see through the hearts of men.

Of course, Dao Realm experts were all eccentrics with vast experience and unique personalities. They could tell that Meng Hao's previous threats had been nothing more than explanations about his background. However, he had intentionally spoken them out and then let them hang in the air suspensefully. In the end, it didn't really matter if the Dao Realm experts fully believed him or not, the important thing was to plant seeds of doubt and fear in their minds.

Next to the old woman was an old man with an expressionless face, wearing a green robe. As he sat there cross-legged, his gaze swept over Meng Hao, seemingly sizing him up.

His eyes seemed to contain a sharpness, an ability to thoroughly probe every aspect of Meng Hao. His eyes lingered for a moment on Meng Hao's forehead, and his eyes sparkled.

Under the old man's gaze, Meng Hao felt his cultivation base involuntarily rotating, and all of a sudden, his forehead flickered as the Echelon mark appeared.

When the old man saw the mark, he nodded and looked away.

“Meng Hao,” said the old woman, smiling, “you can call me Granny Nine.” Her expression was kind as she spoke to Meng Hao.

“As for the Guru sitting next to me, you should refer to him as Godmaster.”

“Meng Hao offers greetings to Matriarch Granny Nine and Guru Godmaster.” Meng Hao immediately reined in all of his domineering and arrogant manner from before, and put on a very meek and charming demeanor. He even looked a bit bashful as he clasped hands and offered formal greetings.

When they saw Meng Hao’s bashful expression, Granny Nine apparently found it very amusing. She looked at Meng Hao, her gaze kind and gentle.

Next to her, Ling Yunzi’s expression was one of approval. Years ago during the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire, he had long since come to have a good impression of Meng Hao, especially his willingness to sacrifice so much for the Nine Seas God World. It had definitely left him with a deep impression.

“This is for you,” Granny Nine said with a laugh, “consider it your welcoming gift for joining the sect.” She made a grasping motion, causing a bag of holding to appear, which she sent floating over to Meng Hao.

He blinked, then accepted it and scanned it with divine sense. Immediately, his heart began to pound with excitement. The bag of holding was filled with masses of pill formulas and jade slips. There was also a huge collection of medicinal plants, many of which were extremely rare in the outside world. The value of the contents of this bag was astronomical.

Ling Yunzi chuckled and said, “We know you’re fond of alchemy, so the three of us old-timers prepared this special gift to give you upon our first meeting. Many of the items in that bag were things that we recently took a trip to acquire just for you.”

Although his words seemed straightforward, the medicinal plants were clearly a reminder to Meng Hao of how much the three of them valued him.

Meng Hao immediately bowed again, and said: "Patriarchs, I offer profound thanks for this expression of utmost generosity and kindness."

With no hesitation whatsoever, he quickly put the bag of holding into his robe, and as he did, he saw the three old-timers shaking their heads and smiling. Even Godmaster, whose face had been expressionless, was now smiling.

"First of all," said Granny Nine, "allow us to apologize for what happened when you first arrived in the Ninth Sea. That was a bit beyond what we had anticipated. Originally, we would have come out immediately to resolve the situation, but because of some certain unforeseen circumstances, we were unable to. We hope that you can understand."

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He was not a newcomer to the world of cultivation, and had in fact practiced cultivation for many years. He had experienced many situations of mutual deception, and knew that there were just some matters that couldn't be pursued too seriously.

He might be able to believe that she was unaware of the reaction his arrival would provoke among the Demonic Cultivator Horde, but he was also sure that the resulting conflict had caused Granny Nine and the faction she represented to suddenly have other motives.

After all, they were the primary faction in the Nine Seas God World, and clearly, they wanted to use the opportunity to put the Demonic Cultivator Horde in place. Meng Hao couldn't really say anything about that.

It was much the same as it had been in the Fang Clan. He had been used in a similar way back then... which was fine. However, being used in such a way should come with compensation. Therefore, after receiving the bag of holding, he quickly put any feelings of ill-will to rest.

Meng Hao was sure that if events hadn't played out the way they had, there would still have been a gift presented. However, it would most likely have contained about half of the valuable medicinal plants that it did.

Seeing Meng Hao's obedient and charming attitude, as well as his quick wit and lack of any prying into the details of what had happened, caused the praise in Granny Nine's eyes to grow even stronger.

“Now that you’re here in the Nine Seas God World, I’ll give you a simple rundown of the origin of the Three Great Daoist Societies,” the woman began slowly. As soon as she started talking, Meng Hao’s ears perked up. “These are things that we can tell you, but they must not be spread beyond this room.

“The Three Great Daoist Societies have existed eternally from the beginning of the Nine Mountains and Seas down to this day.

“As to how they were started, well, they were founded by none other than the three supreme Paragons!”

“The true names of those three Paragons have long since been forgotten. However, everyone referred to them as Paragon Immortal Ancient, Paragon Nine Seals, and Paragon Sea Dream!

“Paragon Immortal Ancient founded the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Paragon Sea Dream founded the Nine Seas God World and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto.

“That is the origin of the Three Great Daoist Societies. You have met Paragon Sea Dream; she is the one who placed you into the Echelon. She is also the only surviving Paragon....” Granny Nine’s voice floated out as if from ancient times, slowly lifting up the veil that covered the truth of the history of the Three Great Daoist Societies.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment. Some of these things were matters he had already guessed the truth of. However, to hear them personally out of the mouth of the Granny Nine left him quite shaken. Finally, he asked, “The Three Great Daoist Societies aren’t specific to the Ninth Mountain and Sea, are they? And what about Paragon Nine Seals? What did he create?”

“Excellent questions,” replied the woman, nodding. Her eyes shone with praise. “Each and every one of the Nine Mountains and Seas has Three Great Daoist Societies!”

Her words caused Meng Hao’s mind to spin.

“They are all called the Nine Seas God World, the Immortal Ancient

Daoist Rite and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto.

“There are nine Nine Seas God Worlds, and when they are combined... that is the TRUE Nine Seas God World!” Granny Nine’s voice was calm as she spoke.

“As for Paragon Nine Seals, nobody knows exactly what he founded. However, throughout the years, various clues have been discovered, which have led to sundry speculations and rumors....” At this point, Granny Nine stopped talking, almost as if she were still in shock and disbelief over the words she was about to speak.

The person to complete the thought was not the Granny Nine, but the expressionless old man who was called guru Godmaster. “According to the rumors,” he said, “Paragon Nine Seals created... the entire Mountain and Sea Realm!”

When Meng Hao heard this, his mind filled with crashing rumbling. The information contained in what he had heard was something completely unheard of, leaving him shaken and panting.

“Paragon Nine Seals created the Mountain and Sea Realm?” he exclaimed.

“It’s merely speculation,” Godmaster said, his archaic voice echoing out through the temple hall. “There’s no way to determine whether it’s true or not. However, Paragon Nine Seals was the leader of the three great Paragons, so perhaps... during the era of the great war, he was the only one who could accomplish such a feat, to reverse the fate of the cosmos, and to leave behind a tiny strand of incense burning as a memorial for the Immortal Realm.” His voice reverberated throughout the temple.

“It is this speculation that leads us to believe that Paragon Nine Seals’ Daoist magic was none other than the Mountain and Sea Scripture!

“Whoever can acquire the full Mountain and Sea Scripture, will be the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm! That person will lead us into battle against the 33 Heavens, and restore the Immortal Realm to its former glory!

“The world we live in is the Immortal Realm, the Paragon Immortal Realm which once ruled over all the 3,000 Lower Realms!” Godmaster closed his eyes to conceal the grief contained therein.

Meng Hao was breathing heavily. He had learned from his Soulsearch of Yi Fazi that the Mountain and Sea Realm was what remained of the Paragon Immortal Realm. However, to hear the story directly from the mouth of guru Godmaster was a different matter. All of a sudden, images he had gained from the Soulsearch floated up in his mind.

“It’s enough that you know just this much,” Granny Nine said softly. “It’s better that you remain unaware of some of the more complicated details....

“The mission of the Three Great Daoist Societies is to help the Echelon grow. The Echelon was begun by Paragon Sea Dream. All of the nine Mountains and Seas have cultivators who are part of the Echelon. As for the Ninth Mountain and Sea... we have the fewest members. The first was your ancestor, and the second is you.

“Your path is not limited to the Ninth Mountain and Sea, but rather, the entire Mountain and Sea Realm. Your competitors, are no longer the fellow members of your generation, but rather... members of the Echelon from throughout the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“The Echelon battles are brutal, and on many occasions, are not just between two opponents. Sometimes, the power of entire sects will back two opponents, even leading to huge inter-mountain wars!

“We are not asking you to be the most powerful member of the Echelon. Rather, we just hope... that you can maintain your spot! If you simply continue on down your path, then whatever price must be paid by the Three Great Daoist Societies of the Ninth Mountain and Sea... will be worth it!” Granny nine looked deep into Meng Hao’s eyes, her expression one of anticipation.

Meng Hao found it hard to remain calm. Although he had already guessed the truth about many of these things, his heart was still filled with incomparable waves of shock.

Chapter 1042: Trial by Fire of the Windswept Realm

There wasn't even a slight breeze within the temple hall, but as of this moment, Meng Hao felt like there was a gale force wind buffeting his heart, giving rise to waves of shock. Rumbling sounds filled his mind, causing him to feel somewhat dazed.

"No one can say for certain what Paragon Sea Dream's plan is for the Echelon...." Granny Nine said. Her voice floated like the wind throughout the temple hall.

"However, there is no harm in speculating. Over the years, the Three Great Daoist Societies of the Mountain and Sea Realm have pieced together what we feel is the answer. It is a simple explanation that we think comes close to the truth.

"The Echelon... is a list of Paragons!

"The only people who can join the Echelon are people who qualify to eventually become a Paragon.

"The Echelon was put in place to develop Paragons for the Mountain and Sea Realm!" Granny Nine's eyes shone with flickering light, and her voice was filled with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

"After the great catastrophe, no new Paragons appeared within the Mountain and Sea Realm. Even Ksitigarbha, who everyone acknowledges as the most powerful cultivator in the Realm, is not considered a Paragon.

"That might seem normal," Granny Nine said softly. "After all, to become a Paragon is a very, very difficult thing. However, the truth of the matter is... it defies logic. As for the reasons why such a situation has come to be, perhaps only Paragon Sea Dream knows."

Meng Hao's mind trembled.

"That is the origin of the Three Great Daoist Societies and the Echelon." As she finished talking, she looked at Meng Hao. Godmaster sat next to

her, eyes closed, unspeaking.

Ling Yunzi also sat there quietly, sighing inwardly.

Granny Nine then gave Meng Hao a deep look and continued, “As the Nine Seas God World of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, what we can do for you is exert all our power to assist you in entering the Ancient Realm!

“Therefore, we give you authority within all areas of the sect. We will open wide the doors to all of our Daoist magics and all of our resources, and to our utmost ability, make them available to you. However, those things are secondary. The most important thing....

“Is that we will open the Windswept Realm for you!”

As soon as Granny Nine mentioned the Windswept Realm, Ling Yunzi slowly looked up, and Godmaster opened his eyes.

An intense pressure weighed down on the temple as she spoke the name. Apparently, the words themselves contained some shocking power.

Granny Nine lowered her voice and said: “The Windswept Realm is a trial by fire location unique to the Nine Seas God Worlds of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“All of the Three Great Daoist Societies has their own unique worlds within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“Each and every one of the various Nine Seas God Worlds, including ours, are qualified to make an appeal to open the Windswept Realm. Over all the years, we have only proposed to do so once, for your Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch!

“Now, after so many years have passed, we are prepared to open it a second time... for you!”

“Windswept Realm?” Meng Hao said, somewhat taken aback. He could tell that these three Dao Realm experts took the matter very seriously. However, he had never heard of this Windswept Realm before. It was completely foreign to him.

“Before the great catastrophe,” Granny Nine explained wistfully, “there

were 3,000 Lower Realms beneath the Paragon Immortal Realm. During the catastrophe, many of those 3,000 Lower Realms rebelled. War broke out... and in the end, almost all of them were destroyed.

“Only 33 Realms remained complete....”

“The Windswept Realm was once one of the 3,000 Lower Realms. It was one of the rebel Realms that was mostly destroyed in the great war. The bit that remained was taken away by Paragon Sea Dream. All who live there now are the descendants of those felon citizens!

“Over the years, after having been continuously groomed and trained for many years, they returned to upholding many of their former traditions. They came to hold the Immortal Realm in reverence and awe, and became the location of the Nine Seas God World’s trial by fire!

“There, you can experience... how utterly supreme the Immortal Realm was in its heyday!”

At this point, a strange gleam appeared in Godmaster’s eyes. Even Ling Yunzi was panting as he contemplated his desire for the glories of the past.

“The reason why the Windswept Realm became a location for a trial by fire, and in fact, the first such location for the Nine Seas God World, is because when the Windswept Realm was shattered, its Essence was thrown into chaos.

“Because of that chaotic state, the area is much easier to analyze. Therefore, to cultivators... it is the perfect location to experience the sensation of Essence.” Granny Nine’s voice seemed to contain a bizarre power as it bored into Meng Hao’s ears, causing his heart to tremble ceaselessly.

“Essence is the door to the Dao Realm,” she continued slowly. “Furthermore, traversing the Ancient Realm... is the process of continually making contact with Essence.

“That is especially true in the Windswept Realm. The World Essence can be absorbed, leading to incredible enlightenment regarding the Essence

power!

“As for you personally, you will be able to directly form your Dao Fruit, and use the Essence of that world to directly enter the Ancient Realm!”

When Meng Hao heard all of this, his mind reeled. He had learned about some of the matters of the past from Yi Fazi’s memories. But now that he heard Granny Nine’s explanation, he understood about the Windswept Realm.

It was... one of the worlds of the past!!

Although only half of it remained, it was still a different world!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with a strange light. His path to the Ancient Realm had to do with Nirvana Fruits. Now that he knew he could use the Essence of that world to form Dao Fruits, he was also certain that it would be of extreme usefulness in absorbing his Nirvana Fruits.

“The Windswept Realm will be opened for your trial by fire by us here in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. However... the Windswept Realm belongs to all of the Nine Seas God Worlds of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Therefore... when you go in, other Nine Seas God Worlds will also dispatch disciples to enter.

“Obviously, since they are qualified to open the Windswept Realm, they will also have arranged for qualified disciples to enter who... are also in the Echelon!

“As such, when you enter the Windswept Realm for your trial by fire, you will likely encounter... other members of the Echelon from the Mountain and Sea Realm.” As she said these things, her eyes glowed with a brilliant light.

“If you can, kill the other members of the Echelon from the Mountain and Sea Realm. However, if you aren’t able to kill them, don’t forget that protecting your own life is your main priority!”

Meng Hao looked at Granny Nine silently for a moment and then nodded. He understood that the Echelon... was like a brood of magical

venomous insects which grew strong by preying on each other. Once you were in the Echelon, only by passing through numerous deadly situations alive, could one become truly powerful.

Currently, the Mountain and Sea Realm needed some extreme power. It needed... a true Paragon!

“Perhaps, what it needs is not just a Paragon,” he thought. “After all, the three great Paragons of yesteryear were only able to preserve a small memorial to the Immortal Realm and thus prevent its complete destruction.

“Perhaps... in order to resolve all of the problems that exist, what is needed... is something that exceeds a Paragon!” Meng Hao took a deep breath, and suddenly, an image appeared in his mind. He saw nine suns dragging an enormous statue. There were also nine butterflies pulling a gigantic coffin. 1

“Although we have already begun preparations to open the Windswept Realm,” Granny Nine said calmly, “we still need three months to be completely ready.

“During those three months, stay in the sect and prepare fully for the battles you will face...

“The pressure exerted by the Ninth Sea will put a heavy burden on you in terms of cultivation. You need to acclimate yourself to it as quickly as possible. Not only will it help you in the years to come, more importantly... the fact that the Windswept Realm is half destroyed and its Essence is in chaos means that you will find similar pressure there.

“Only by getting used to the pressure of the Ninth Sea will you be able to function normally in the Windswept Realm. If you don’t, every step you take there will be an arduous one.

“In addition, don’t forget about our sect’s golden gate stone steles. Each one of them represents a trial by fire. I hope that you... can participate in every one of them! You must do everything possible to make yourself stronger during these coming three months!

“I hope to see your name on each one of those steles. You are in the Echelon, the second of your kind throughout all the history of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!” Granny Nine waved her hand, sending a bag of holding flying out to hover in front of Meng Hao.

“Inside that bag of holding, you will find the first place prize for our Daoist Societies’ disciple recruitment event!

“There were many rewards, all of which are inside. Of course, the most valuable of all... would be, secondarily, the ancient Immortal artifact, and most of all... Paragon blood!

“Before entering the Windswept Realm, you can use it to... experience what intense power is truly like!

“How far your path stretches out ahead of you depends on your good fortune.” Granny Nine gave Meng Hao a deep look that was clearly filled with hope and anticipation.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked silently at the bag of holding. Finally, his eyes began to shine with a bright light, and he reached out and took the bag. Then he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Granny Nine, to Godmaster, and to Ling Yunzi.

He did not make any promises or utter expressions of thanks. At the moment, anything he said would be meaningless. Only by clasping hands and bowing could he express his sincerity and determination.

Granny Nine’s eyes glowed with praise, and Godmaster nodded. Ling Yunzi already thought well of Meng Hao, and a slight smile could be seen on his face.

“Go,” Granny Nine said, smiling. “That bag of holding also contains a jade slip key to an Immortal’s cave. It is there that you may practice cultivation in the coming three months. There is also an identity command medallion, which you can use to go anywhere in the sect.”

Meng Hao nodded. It was at this point that Godmaster suddenly spoke.

“When the Demonic Cultivator Horde asked for you to return their disciples that you captured, all you had to do was give them back, and the

problem would have been resolved. Why be so uncompromising?" The old man's face was expressionless, but his eyes shone with a profound look.

"If the result of me returning them was a reduction in the hostility shown toward me by the Demonic cultivators, then of course I would have," explained Meng Hao. "However, that clearly would not have happened. Therefore, why should I return them?!"

"I can sell all of those seafood dishes for spirit stones and Immortal jade, or use them as threats." He smiled.

Godmaster was also smiling as he replied, "You will be safe inside the sect. However, if you go out... you must be extremely cautious. If anything untoward happens, do not hesitate to crush your command medallion. As long as you are within 1,000,000 nautical miles of the sect, I can be there within three breaths of time to provide aid!"

Then he closed his eyes and said no more. Now that he was certain about Meng Hao's personality, he firmly approved of him.

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed. He was just about to leave when all of a sudden, he stopped in place and turned back to look at the three old timers.

"Junior wishes to ask a question. What exactly is the reason that the sea beasts attacked me when I entered the Ninth Sea. Furthermore, why did I cause such an uproar among the Demonic cultivators when I arrived at the Nine Seas God World? Why do they hate me so much?"

"It almost seemed like the level of their cultivation base didn't matter; they instantly hated me so much that they couldn't live under the same sky as me. I really don't understand. Seniors, can you clear up this matter?" Meng Hao looked at the three old timers expectantly. He truly wished to know the answer to this question!

He just didn't believe that they didn't know the answer. Considering their status in the sect, even if they had known nothing at first, a brief inquiry would have made everything clear to them.

1. I have compiled a list of chapters mentioning nine suns and nine butterflies. Have at it! 555, 587, 613, 652, 664, 818, 819, 954, 1026.

Chapter 1043: The Answer!

As soon as Meng Hao asked the question, both Granny Nine and Ling Yunzi smiled. As for Godmaster, he simply sat there silently with his eyes closed.

“And here I thought you were going to leave without asking,” the woman said with a smile.

The person to respond to the question, however, was not Granny Nine, but rather, Ling Yunzi.

“At first,” he said, “even we weren’t aware of what caused the situation. After some checking, we came to find out that it was your aura which caused everything.”

“My aura?” asked Meng Hao, his eyes widening. He instantly discarded more than half of his previous speculations.

Ling Yunzi didn’t immediately provide an explanation, but instead, began to describe Demonic cultivators: “Demonic cultivators are a unique type of life form. They are not cultivators, and yet, they are also not Demons. They originally evolved because of the unique environment of the Ninth Sea; they are transmogrified life forms.

“They seem like cultivators, but are not. They also seem like Demons, but are not. Because of that, they call themselves... Demonic cultivators!

“Demonic cultivators like this can only be found in the seas of the Mountain and Sea Realm. As for the sea beasts you encountered out in the Ninth Sea, they simply have not completely transmogrified, and are not quite sentient. However, give them enough time, and they all have the potential to become Demonic cultivators.

“The Demonic cultivators call themselves a horde, and are extremely xenophobic. Although they are physically different from the sea beasts, they consider themselves to be all part of the same horde. Even the other sea beasts which have not yet awakened to sentience are still viewed as family.

“If you harm one of their family members, even a single one, then they will be able to sense that from your aura.

“In fact, many of them have bloodline connections to other sea beasts. Because of this, it’s not hard to imagine why, in reality, the rulers of the Ninth Sea are not cultivators, but them.”

As Meng Hao listened, his jaw slowly dropped and his eyes went wide. He had considered virtually all possibilities, and yet nothing he had thought of... had anything remotely to do with this.

The truth of the matter was far, far less complicated than anything he had come up with. It wasn’t about the League of Demon Sealers, or the black-colored spirit-immortal stones, or some long-standing enmity with the Fang Clan, or some situation in which he threatened someone’s power.

Meng Hao smiled wryly as he realized the truth of the matter.

“Once they become Demonic cultivators,” continued Ling Yunzi, “They are actually not very different from cultivators. In fact, in many aspects, they are more powerful than us. In their cultivation, they can achieve Immortal Ascension, can enter the Ancient Realm, and can step into the Dao Realm.

“Throughout the years, many Demonic cultivators have left this area and gone out to other locations in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, even to other planets. There, they reproduced, giving birth to countless successive generations of their kind. Unfortunately, though, it is only in the Ninth Sea that the beasts can gain sentience and then become Demonic cultivators. In other locations, such a thing is impossible.

“Regardless of that, however, the sea beasts in the oceans of the other planets are all descended from the Ninth Sea. As such, they are all fellow horde members, and many of them are even related by blood.” When Ling Yunzi saw Meng Hao’s wry smile, a strange expression appeared on his face. He and the other two old-timers hadn’t expected a reaction like this.

“I understand,” said Meng Hao, sighing.

“All seafood under heaven is one big family....” he said, musing about how unfair the whole situation was for him. He was now certain that all of the countless sea beasts he had killed back in the Milky Way Sea on Planet South Heaven were definitely fellow horde members of the Demonic cultivators here. But how could he possibly have known back then that this would be the result?

Although the sea beasts were separated by a huge distance, and even multiple generations, and were obviously much weaker than the Demonic cultivators here, it was impossible for them to change their blood. If he had, like the average cultivator, only killed a few in the occasional random encounter, it most likely wouldn't have caused any stir in the Ninth Sea or the Nine Seas God World.

Demonic cultivators were like ordinary cultivators. They wouldn't start a blood feud because of a handful of non-sentient fellow horde members. But Meng Hao... had not just killed a few random sea creatures. He had killed almost all of the sea beasts in the Milky Way Sea. To the Demonic cultivators, that was almost like a genocide of an entire branch of one of their bloodlines.

Even he wasn't sure how many Demon hearts he had acquired back then.

It wasn't even possible to count how many sea beasts had died because of him. However many, it was enough to completely and utterly contaminate him with an indescribable aura. It was easy to imagine the reaction of the Demonic cultivators to anyone who showed up in the Ninth Sea with an aura like that.

Meng Hao was now feeling somewhat depressed. Were it some other reason, he could probably figure out a way to change things. After all, this was the Ninth Sea, and he had no desire to have blood enmity with the Demonic cultivators.

This was a matter of aura... and the ability of the fellow horde members to sense each other. In their view, Meng Hao's hands were soaked in blood, and it was something he couldn't do anything about.

“Can the aura be covered over?” he asked.

“Unfortunately, this type of aura cannot be concealed,” replied Ling Yunzi, sighing.

“The only thing you can do is be extra careful. Try not to leave the sect. Unfortunately, it is something we could never have predicted. How could we ever have imagined that you would be infected with an aura as strong as this?” Ling Yunzi was also feeling a bit down.

“The true masters of the Ninth Sea are the Demonic cultivators,” Granny Nine said slowly. “Although the Nine Seas God World holds sway here, if you trace things back to the beginning, we essentially forced our way in.

“However, legend has it that the whole reason the Demonic cultivators could achieve sentience to begin with has to do with Paragon Sea Dream. Because of that, we have coexisted throughout the years and have come to accept each other. Furthermore, the Demonic Cultivator Horde is a faction of the Nine Seas God World, both here in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and in the other Nine Seas God Worlds in the other Mountains and Seas.

“Don’t let yourself worry about it too much. The Demonic Cultivator Horde is a part of the Nine Seas God World, and as such, must adhere to the rules of the sect. Everything... is done for the Echelon.

“Therefore, you can simply view this matter as another trial by fire.”

Meng Hao sighed. All he could do now was nod his head, clasp hands, and bow. Then he turned and left the temple hall. As he walked out and stood there atop the mountain, a cold wind sprang up. He looked off into the distance and, from this elevation, could see most of the Nine Seas God World.

“Well, might as well not worry about it. I can’t resolve the problem, so it’s not worth stewing over.” He pulled out the jade slip key from his bag of holding and scanned it with divine sense. Immediately a map of the Ninth Sea God World appeared.

After perusing the map, he found the Immortal’s cave the three old timers had arranged for him. It was near the central district, between two

mountain ranges.

He put the jade slip away, took a step forward, and then transformed into a brilliant beam of light that shot rumbling through the air toward his Immortal's cave. As he sped through the air, he encountered various disciples of the Nine Seas God World.

If they were cultivators, they would raise an eyebrow, clearly having recognized who he was. If they were Demonic cultivators, then as soon as they saw him, they visibly restrained themselves, their eyes shining with intense hatred and killing intent.

Meng Hao simply kept his gaze fixed straight ahead as he sped along. He went faster and faster, and after about an hour, arrived in the region of his Immortal's cave. When he looked around, the first things that stood out were two mountain ranges that looked like dragons, stretching out far and wide.

In the middle of the mountains was a huge cliff that seemed to have been formed by a seismic upheaval. Water flowed over the edge of the cliff, transforming into a towering waterfall.

Rumbling rose up from the base of the waterfall, along with massive quantities of water vapor that spread out in all directions, causing a curtain of mist to obscure the area. The water at the bottom formed a crystalline, blue pool. The energy of Heaven and Earth was very strong in the area.

Next to the pool of water was a two-story residence.

The entire area was filled with the fragrance of flowers and the singing of birds. It was like a celestial garden, filled with exotic plants and flowers, whose fragrance filled the canyon-like area surrounding the pool of water.

Cliffs rose up on all sides like impassable obstacles. Even though his place was almost in the center of the Nine Seas God World, it was secluded and peaceful.

Furthermore, considering that the residence was built into the cliff face, it was easy to imagine that it was far larger than its outward appearance.

In fact, deep inside the cliff there would definitely be chambers carved into the stone.

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on it, he was thoroughly pleased.

His body flashed as he flew down past the waterfall and landed next to the pool of water. Numerous animals in the area were startled, and scattered in all directions. The grass and plants swayed gently at the disturbance, causing a fragrant aroma to fill the air. The sound of the falling waterfall instantly lifted Meng Hao's spirits.

"This place is great!" he thought, looking around contentedly. He walked over to the residence and looked around with increasing satisfaction, then let out a light, "Eee?" He raised his right hand and performed an incantation gesture, then pointed out. His gesture caused a wind to spring up toward a stone stele located in front of the residence.

When the wind touched the stele, it shuddered. Next, a glowing shield sprang up to cover the entire area. The sky up above was sealed off, and the waterfall was interrupted.

No more water fell down, and water began to build up on the shield. Soon, it looked like a second pool of water, floating in the air up above.

The sides of this new pool were formed by the cliff faces, and its bottom was the shield. When he saw it, Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly as he realized that this was the ultimate location for secluded meditation.

It was completely cut off from the world, and also, totally safe.

In the same moment that Meng Hao was looking around contentedly at his Immortal's cave in the Nine Seas God World, far far away, something happened in the starry sky. That place... was not located in the Mountain and Sea Realm. Furthermore, it was a location outside of the 33 Heavens. It was located... in a different starry sky.

Visible was a projection of an ancient land mass. It was so enormous that it was impossible to describe, and it hung there in the void, emanating constant and endless pressure.

Within this projected world was... a huge coffin, as well as nine

beautiful, colorful butterflies.

Surrounding the coffin was an endless sea of people, all prostrating themselves in worship.

In front of the crowds of people were three young women who were indescribably beautiful. Their eyes were filled with both hope and reminiscence as they looked at the coffin, and then down at the land beneath their feet.

In front of the three young women was an old man wearing a black robe. At his back was the illusory image of an ancient tree. Currently, his two hands were held aloft, and he was shouting loudly up into the air. It sounded like some sort of curse, although it was impossible to hear exactly what he was saying.

It didn't take long, however, for a mass of black mist to appear in front of him. It roiled and seethed, emanating a strong aura of death.

"I found it... almost. If it is used just one more time, I'll be able to locate it!" After a long moment, the old man coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his body seemed to wither. The tree behind him also withered, as if he had just spent a huge amount of life force to speak those words.

It wasn't just him who paid the price to speak the words. Everyone in the sea of people around him also spit up mouthfuls of blood. The nine butterflies trembled, and of the four wings they each possessed, two fell off.

In another location within the same void in which that world projection existed, was yet another boundlessly majestic projection of a world.

Within that world existed a huge statue of a man!

In that world, there were nine suns!!

At the foot of the statue was a young man wearing a white robe. If you looked closely, you would see... that he looked exactly like the statue!!

He shook his head and smiled.

"Mother was right. Those who are reborn are always more eager than

those who have already returned.” 1

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Note from Er Gen: Lots of you readers guess the answer. Pretty awesome!

Note from Deathblade: Same with readers of the translation! I saw quite a few correct guesses. Unless you were secretly posting spoilers as “guesses,” in which case you have sown vile Karma and will be punished!!!!

*

1. I saw speculation by Chinese fans about what this last line means, but nothing very definite. I’ll continue to do some research and if I find anything more I’ll post on twitter or in a chapter release.

Chapter 1044: Initial Absorption of Paragon Blood!

The people of the Mountain and Sea Realm had no way of knowing what was happening outside of their Realm.

Back in the Nine Seas God World, in the valley between the two mountain ranges, the pool of water continued to build up above the shield. At the same time, a figure stepped out noiselessly from within the residence.

Meng Hao had sensed this person earlier, and as such, his expression did not change when the young boy walked out. He looked to be about seven or eight years old, wore a red robe, and had a completely expressionless face. As soon as he stepped out, he clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

“What an incredible puppet,” Meng Hao murmured, walking up to the boy and looking him over. The boy looked almost as if he had been carved out of a lustrous piece of rare jade.

Meng Hao reached his hand out and pressed it down onto the puppet. Immediately, an additional puppet-controlling mnemonic appeared in his mind.

“This Immortal’s cave must be one of the best within the Nine Seas God World,” he thought. “Only a place like this could be deserving such a puppet. Whenever I have to deal with acquiring cultivation resources, I can just sent him out to handle things.

“Furthermore, it looks like he has battle prowess equivalent to a stage 7 Immortal.”

Meng Hao was very pleased. This Immortal’s cave far exceeded any other Immortal’s cave he had ever lived in. Regardless of whether or not the pool of water was being fed by the waterfall, it was as blue and crystalline as ever. Furthermore, the pond itself was actually made, not from freshwater, but seawater.

“How considerate of them,” he said. Then he waved his hand, instantly causing the 33 Demonic cultivators to fly out of his bag of holding and splash into the pool.

Before they could even react, he performed an incantation gesture and then waved his finger. Popping sounds rang out as all of the 33 Demonic cultivators were sealed. All of them reverted to their original forms, whereupon they spun and began to howl at Meng Hao in rage.

“Shut up!” he growled. His voice echoed out like thunder, instantly causing all of the Demonic cultivators to tremble. Moments later, everything was quiet. The Demonic cultivators now looked like sea beasts, but they were still glaring angrily at Meng Hao.

That was especially true of the gigantic shell, which had now cracked open to reveal a pair of venomous eyes staring out at him.

There was also a huge sea turtle, who looked especially fierce.

In addition to those two, there was a big shrimp, a crab, a seahorse, and others. Meng Hao looked them over, and then a grotesque idea suddenly popped up in his head.

“This pool of water almost looks like a giant pot. If I heated the water up....” He swallowed, then quickly shoved the wicked idea away. However, it was in that moment that the Demonic cultivators, who had just quieted down moments ago, suddenly lost control and began to roar again. A few of them even tried to charge at Meng Hao in attack.

With a cold harrumph, Meng Hao pointed his hand downward, causing all of them to tremble, as if great pressure were weighing down on them. It was impossible for them to escape from within the pool of water, so once again, the sound of vehement curses rose up into the air.

Ignoring them, Meng Hao waved his right finger, causing a strand of the Essence of Divine Flame to fly out from his Immortal meridians. It landed in the water, and in the blink of an eye, the water began to bubble.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then somewhat embarrassedly said, “If you don’t keep your voices down, there are no guarantees that I won’t boil

you up and have a taste!”

His words, combined with the fact that the water in the pool was rapidly getting hotter, caused the Demonic cultivators to tremble. They looked at Meng Hao, not with hatred, but rather... terror and shock.

They had never imagined that Meng Hao would actually boil them into a stew!

Seeing that the Demonic cultivators had quieted down, Meng Hao waved a hand, retracting the strand of the Essence of Divine Flame. The water temperature in the pool instantly began to return to normal.

“That’s better. Now!” he said earnestly. “Remember to be good and do as you’re told. You people owe me money and can’t pay it back. That was why you handed yourselves over to me. Now, I’m going to provide you with a master to help you learn how to achieve your goal, which is... to sell yourselves!” With that, he slapped his bag of holding, causing the parrot to shoot out in a beam of black light.

The tinkling sound of a bell could be heard, along with a torrent of squawks.

“Lord Fifth is out! Lord Fifth swears to never go back into that bag of holding! Lord Fifth is free! Lord Fifth is going to... Eee?!” Even in midst of its tirade, Lord Fifth suddenly looked down at all the Demonic cultivators in the pool of water.

The bell-form meat jelly was also in the midst of howling in rage, when suddenly it realized the parrot had grown silent. It, too, looked down at the Demonic cultivators.

After staring for a moment, the meat jelly got excited and said, “Are we taking a bath together?” as if it wanted to join in.

The parrot flew around in a circle, looking closely at the situation and then roared: “Moron! Idiot! Can’t you see he’s making some seafood stew? They’re not taking a bath! Dammit! How come none of this seafood has fur!?!?”

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then addressed the meat jelly: “These

are all bullies. You can count if you want, there are three. Three bullies. I caught them just for you and brought them here for you to practice your divine ability of converting people!”

The meat jelly quivered with excitement as it counted. When it was done, it looked over at Meng Hao as if he were the best person in the whole world. In the meat jelly’s opinion, it had never met a master who treated it as well as Meng Hao did.

Meng Hao smiled slightly, as if the two of them were best friends. Then he glanced over at the parrot and glared threateningly.

“We can sell every one of these seafood dishes that you can get to behave for a handsome profit. For each one, I’ll find one extremely furry creature for you.

“If you can train them all, then later, I’ll give you a thirty percent split!”

When the parrot heard the words ‘extremely furry’ it instantly got very excited. It suddenly began to visualize all sorts of extremely furry creatures, and that only increased its enthusiasm. It immediately agreed to Meng Hao’s proposal.

Meng Hao promptly ignored the parrot and meat jelly as they began to torment the Demonic cultivators. He was sure that, considering how “strong” they were, getting the Demonic cultivator seafood dishes in line wasn’t an impossibility for them.

“Then there’s that wench Su Yan,” he thought. “I’ll wait a few more days and then hand her over to the parrot and meat jelly for re-education. I just can’t believe that she’ll continue to hold out after that.” Having made up his mind, he entered the residence.

The residence itself wasn’t very large. However, there was a stone door on the second floor. Behind the stone door were three chambers, each of which were relatively large.

After examining them, Meng Hao muttered to himself for a moment. Then, eyes glittering, he slapped his bag of holding, causing 30 black beetles to fly out, ten for each chamber.

Glancing thoughtfully at the Ghost Eyes on their backs, he thought, "I heard Su Yan call these things Ghost Eye Beetles....

"They like eating spirit-immortal stones. Well then, I might as well let them eat their fill... and see what kind of Ghost Eye appears in the end!" He had come up with this idea some time ago, so, clenching his teeth, he didn't hesitate any further. He hated losing spirit-immortal stones, but he also knew that on the path of cultivation, you had to lose some to win some.

He waved his hand, causing thirty spirit-immortal stones to fly out into the three chambers. Instantly, the Ghost Eye Beetles went mad, clawing their way forward to grab the stones.

He threw out one stone per beetle in order to prevent them from fighting too much. After all, he only had 500 Ghost Eye Beetles, and wanted to avoid a situation in which they killed each other.

It didn't take long for the Ghost Eye Beetles to consume the spirit-immortal stones, after which they sat there, motionless. However, their auras grew wildly stronger and their bodies grew tougher, as if they were in the process of absorbing energy from the stones they had swallowed.

After a moment of consideration, he decided that since the Ghost Eye Beetles were taking some time to absorb the energy, he would make use of the puppet boy. Summoning him over, he handed some spirit-immortal stones over and then left some divine will instructions that the puppet continue to feed the stones to the beetles as necessary. Then he left the stone chambers and sat down cross-legged on the second floor of the residence.

He took a deep breath, and determination gleamed in his eyes as he extended his right hand. Immediately a bag of holding appeared, which he scanned with divine sense. He saw quite a collection of spirit stones and Immortal jade, as well as an incense burner.

The incense burner had an ancient feel to it, as though its aura was filled with years of time.

"This thing must be the Immortal artifact that Patriarch Granny Nine

mentioned,” he thought. Ignoring it for the moment, he excitedly searched through the bag of holding to find the most precious item it contained.

A jade vial!

The vial was only the size of a pinky finger, and it contained... a drop of red fluid. It was none other than... Paragon’s blood!!

He carefully retrieved the vial from the bag of holding, then placed it onto his palm. Panting, he thought back to the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire, and how he had taken first place. For some reason it seemed like a very, very long time ago.

“I finally got my prize! But I wonder... which Paragon did this blood come from? Was it the white-robed Sea Dream, or was it Immortal Ancient? Or could it be from... Paragon Nine Seals?” He took a deep breath, and without any further hesitation, opened the jade vial. Instead of pouring the Paragon’s blood out, he slowly sent his divine sense into the vial.

Almost as soon as his divine sense made contact with the Paragon’s blood, a bloody mist rose up. In the blink of an eye, it swept back through his divine sense toward him. He was shocked, but after a moment of hesitation, he gritted his teeth and sat in place without moving.

That strand of blood mist bored into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. In the same moment, he closed the jade vial, ensuring that the Paragon’s blood remained inside. Apparently, that drop was only a thirty percent sample.

However, even that thirty percent created a massive power that surged madly through his body.

Blue veins popped out on his face, and his whole body shook. The blood mist transformed into millions of strands which bored into his Immortal meridians. Gradually, the vague power of a Dao Fruit began to form.

Moments later, it collapsed, battering around the inside of Meng Hao’s body.

Shaken, he quickly produced a Nirvana Fruit and pushed it into his

forehead. In that moment, the tens of millions of strands inside of him all seemed to have found their exit.

His body shook, and his aura exploded upward. All of his Immortal qi was unleashed. His energy surged as the Nirvana Fruit apparently began to fuse into his blood vessels and qi passageways.

If he absorbed it completely, that would indicate that he had fused successfully with the Nirvana Fruit. That would also mean... that he would rise up in his position in the Immortal Realm, and would be be incredibly close to being able to remain in the Immortal Emperor Realm... eternally!

Chapter 1045: ROCKED!

Time passed one breath at a time. He had long since passed the usual time limit for the Nirvana Fruit. However, after enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, he still sat there, Nirvana Fruit fully absorbed. He opened his eyes, grabbed the jade vial, and was about to open it, but then hesitated.

The hundreds of thousands of strands inside of him were growing dimmer, and would rapidly vanish. Unfortunately, the Nirvana Fruit still wasn't completely fused with him, not even by half. In terms of percentages, then as of this moment, the Nirvana Fruit seemed to be about one percent fused.

"Even if I completely absorbed this entire sample of Paragon's blood," he thought, "then at most, I could achieve a four percent absorption...."

"It's not that the Paragon's blood isn't strong, nor that it's fake. Rather.... this drop of blood is simply too diluted. Who knows how many dilutions it's gone through." He sighed inwardly. He knew that even if the Three Great Daoist Societies did have complete specimens of Paragon's blood, they would still be incredibly scarce.

There was no way they would give him a complete drop. It was true that he was in the Echelon. However, taking a broad view, it was impossible to say whether or not another Echelon member might come along in the future. Although the Three Great Daoist Societies valued him, they couldn't possibly give him undiluted Paragon's blood.

Even a highly diluted drop could still be considered a precious treasure! From the very beginning, all they had agreed to give him was some Paragon's blood. They had never said that it would be complete.

"If I could get a complete, full drop, then I'm certain that after absorbing it, I would then be able to completely fuse with the Nirvana Fruit, and I would truly be an Immortal Emperor!" Desire gleamed in Meng Hao's eyes as he thought about the possibility of being able to eternally retain a cultivation base that exceeded the Immortal Realm Paragon.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone brightly.

“Not complete.... Well then, I’ll just have to create my own complete drop of Paragon’s blood!” Gritting his teeth, he slowly pulled the copper mirror out of his bag of holding. He was of course concerned about how much it might cost him. In fact, he wasn’t even sure if the copper mirror was powerful enough to duplicate the Paragon’s blood.

However, determination filled his face as he looked at the copper mirror for a moment, then placed the vial of Paragon’s blood on its surface. Immediately, the vial began to sink down into the mirror.

Then, the mirror suddenly went berserk in a way it never had before. It shook wildly, flying out of Meng Hao’s hands and up into the air. Brilliant beams of light shot out in all directions, along with a shocking aura.

In the blink of an eye, the entire residence was inundated by a terrifying aura, which began to spread further out. If nothing was done about the spreading of this aura, it would go on to fill the entire Nine Seas God World, and the entire Ninth Sea. From there it would spread out to fill all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and eventually... the entirety of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Outside the residence, the parrot was flying proudly through the air, looking extremely excited at the prospect of how happy its life would be after it exchanged all of the seafood for furry beasts.

Having reached this point in its train of thought, it immediately turned to all of the Demonic cultivators and roared: “Now listen well to Lord Fifth! All of you–”

However, before it could even finish speaking, a tremor suddenly ran through its body, as if some incredible power had suddenly sucked it dry. It withered rapidly, causing it to gape in shock. It suddenly turned to look toward Meng Hao and the residence, clearly astonished. Then it let out the most shrill, anxious squawk that it had ever uttered since it had begun to follow Meng Hao.

It was usually quite calm and collected. It had never reacted this strongly to anything, not even when it ran into the most luxuriantly furred or

feathered creatures. It seemed so nervous that it might collapse at any moment, as if the sky were about to fall or the entire world was about to explode.

“He’s still alive!!” the parrot shrieked. Then it shot toward the residence at top speed, looking completely flustered. It went so fast that numerous feathers were stripped off of it, falling to the ground. Its body shivered with unprecedented terror.

Inside the residence, Meng Hao’s eyes widened at the intensity of the aura, an aura that seemed to either ignore or trample upon all natural laws. It was vastly domineering, as if the Heavens and the starry sky both might be crushed by its terrifying energy.

Suddenly, he could hear a pulsating voice murmuring from within the mirror. It was archaic, seemingly stretching out from ancient times, causing his mind to reel. All of a sudden, countless images flickered in his eyes.

Of all those various images, there were only three that he could see clearly. The rest were flickering blurs. However, the three images he could see caused his scalp to go numb, and his expression to fill with a look of disbelief and utter astonishment.

The first image was that of the Heavens and a starless sky. It was a picture of chaos. There were no heavenly bodies, only emptiness. Then, a beam of light appeared, shooting along at top speed. Within the flickering light, shockingly... was the copper mirror!!

As it flew along, the surface of the mirror flickered. Immediately a heavenly body appeared off to the side. It proceeded along, one after another heavenly body appeared without pause.

In the end its flickering... caused the starry sky to appear, as if it were creating whole worlds!!

It continued on without stop, as if there were no end to its movement. Eventually, however, it vanished, having created innumerable stretches of starry sky that formed countless worlds!

Meng Hao's mind reeled with shock.

The second image he saw was of the uncountable entities which inhabited the various heavenly bodies and worlds that had been created. They were not cultivators, but rather, a vast multitude of indescribable living things.

Some looked like beasts, others were liquid. Some were made of gas, and others were made of metal or stone. There seemed to be an infinite variety, and they were all currently engaged in a chaotic battle!

All of these entities were far, far more powerful than Meng Hao. They were in the Dao Realm!

Meng Hao could scarcely even comprehend how there could be so many Dao Realm entities. There were simply too many, and they were all fighting each other, fighting to acquire one object....

That object was none other than... a copper mirror!

Their battling gave rise to countless indescribable ripples. All of a sudden, the copper mirror trembled, and two pearls shot out from it, one black, one white. Each pearl then sped off in a different direction.

Meng Hao could now see that actually, those two pearls had previously been inlaid on opposite sides of the mirror. The pearls were not the primary components, but rather... just subordinate objects belonging to the copper mirror! 1

Even still, they emanated an aura that left Meng Hao feeling completely suffocated, as though the two pearls contained an indescribable, paramount power!

And yet... despite that incredible power, they were still... subordinates to the mirror!

They were mere secondary objects!

In the third image, Meng Hao saw another world. It was a world filled with corpses, corpses that had lain in place for innumerable years. The whole world felt like a graveyard.

A beam of light flew along, within which was the copper mirror. The mirror was just passing by, and yet, as soon as it appeared, something happened which caused Meng Hao's scalp to tingle. He saw the corpses... rising up one by one. Flesh grew anew, and the blink of an eye, they were resurrected. Their eyes were filled with madness, and even more so, hope. It was as if they had been waiting for ages for this very moment.

Suddenly, a hand shot up, a hand that was mostly white bone, upon which flesh and blood was rapidly forming. The instant it appeared, blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and his mind trembled. The feeling he got from that hand was a feeling he had only ever gotten from one other cultivator.

And that person was... the white-robed Paragon Sea Dream!

Except, from what Meng Hao could sense, the power of that hand exceeded that of Paragon Sea Dream!

It stretched out toward the copper mirror and made a grasping motion. That grasping motion caused the starry sky to be crushed, as if the hand could shrink down the stars and the Heavens until they were tiny items that rested in its palm.

At that point, the vision ended. Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and the images faded away.

"This copper mirror... where does it come from...?" he thought. He felt as if his whole world had been turned upside down. He looked down at the copper mirror, and the vial of Paragon's blood, which was still sinking down into the mirror.

Most shocking of all to Meng Hao was that once again, he could see that the surface of the copper mirror... was not complete!!

It was shattered, and only had one piece in place. How could he possibly forget how he had helped the mirror to acquire that piece in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect!? 2

Everything that happened takes some time to describe, but actually happened in a flash. It was at this point that the parrot suddenly appeared,

and then sped into the mirror itself. The copper mirror trembled, and the light shining out grew even more intense. At this point, the vial of Paragon's blood finally vanished inside.

The terrifying aura ceased to spread out, and instead remained only inside of the residence. After about ten breaths of time passed, it faded away completely, returning to the copper mirror, after which it could not be detected.

After the aura faded away, the parrot emerged. It was emaciated, as if it had just undergone an indescribably desperate ordeal. It smiled wryly as it looked at Meng Hao, then flopped noisily to the ground. After a moment, it struggled to rise up and fly, but could only lay there, panting.

Seeing the parrot in this condition caused Meng Hao to think of the images he had just seen, and he couldn't help but ask: "If I hadn't placed that Paragon's blood onto the mirror...?"

The parrot gaped for a moment. Sounding astonished, it replied, "What's it got to do with you? I was just careless and didn't notice that someone was using some magic on this mirror. If the copper mirror wasn't used, then it wouldn't matter. But once it was used, no matter what you duplicate, it will... Huh?"

About half way through speaking, the parrot suddenly seemed to come to its senses. It rolled its eyes shiftily and squawked: "That's right. Dammit! It's you! It's all because of you! You owe me now!"

At the same time that the parrot was berating Meng Hao, something was happening outside of the Mountain and Sea Realm, outside of the 33 Heavens. Far out in the void of the starry sky, in the middle of the world projection with the huge coffin, an archaic voice filled with excitement and determination suddenly echoed out to fill the entire world.

"I've found it! It's there... right there!!

"After all these years, hope has finally appeared. Clan of Gods, prepare to send orders down!!

"It is time to wage war! In order to awaken our clan's Underworld God,

we will once again... go to war with the Paragon Immortal Realm!!” As the ancient voice echoed out, the world projection began to shake.

At the same time, the three women who stood near the coffin exchanged glances, then nodded to each other silently.

In that instant, the entire world projection began to grow blurry. In the blink of an eye, it vanished from within the void of the Heavens.

“Unleash the power of the world. Employ the maximum possible speed of our God Realm’s true form to travel there, in order to let our true world descend!” The voices of the three women echoed out into the void, filled with a decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

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1. The black and white pearls will likely make some readers recall the scene from the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect in chapter 613.
2. He added a piece to the mirror in a scene that started in chapter 618 and ended in 619.

Chapter 1046: An Iron Chicken That Can Also Pluck Feathers! [1]

Almost in the same moment that the world projection vanished, the three women decided that war should begin. Thus, they caused their own world to approach from its distant location, something that would take time.

In another location in the Heavens was another world, the world with the nine suns and the enormous statue. It was not real, but rather, a projection, in much the same way that the world the three women were in was a projection.

The true worlds were actually in a location far, far away....

In that projected world of nine suns, a decisive, sinister voice was also speaking, the voice of a woman.

“It will take hundreds of years for the other side to arrive. It’s the same for us.... This time, spare no cost! We must succeed!”

The woman’s voice was venomous, and seemed to be filled with a coldness and disregard for all living beings other than those that currently surrounded her. As it echoed out, the world of nine suns gradually began to distort, and then vanish.

Meanwhile, back in the Mountain and Sea Realm, in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao was completely oblivious to all of these things. He was currently frowning at the parrot. Finally, he gave a cold harrumph. Although he had felt a bit guilty before about what happened, seeing the parrot now caused him to glare angrily.

Before he could say anything, however, the parrot blinked, cleared its throat, and then flapped its wings as it flew up into the air. The copper mirror seemed to have lost any ability to float or fly, and clanked to the ground.

The parrot flew out of the residence, seemingly without a care in the world. However, deep in its heart was a mass of anxiety.

“Calamity... is coming. Ai, I screwed up. I never would have thought the other two powers would be so persistent!

“Screw it, I don’t care anymore. In any case, Meng Hao is the master of the mirror this time, so it has nothing to do with Lord Fifth. Worst case scenario, I’ll flee and sleep for a while again.” Finally the parrot cleared its thoughts, pushing away all these vexatious worries. Its eyes then began to shine brightly as it looked at the Demonic cultivators in the pool of water. Once again it began to envision swapping them for numerous furry concubines, and the blissful days that would ensue.

“Hahaha! Lord Fifth is back! Now, all of you listen up and behave! Lord Fifth is going to teach you a song!” The parrot whistled through the air toward the group of Demonic cultivators.

“Come, come, let’s sing together. The name of this little tune is ‘I’m a good little seafood dish!’ If you sing well, Lord Fifth has a reward waiting for you!”

Back in the residence, Meng Hao was frowning. Although the parrot had made light of what had happened, Meng Hao had practiced cultivation for many years, and was adept at analyzing matters. Everything he had seen regarding the copper mirror, plus the parrot’s expression, filled him with a sense of foreboding.

“I’m afraid... something really bad is going to happen,” he murmured. He looked at the copper mirror and thought back to the three images he had seen. Finally, he took a deep breath. More than ever, he felt that the origin of the copper mirror was shrouded in some incredibly profound mystery.

“Just where did it come from?

“Other than duplicating things, it’s definitely has other magical divine abilities that I don’t know of!

“It seems everyone wants it, even the most powerful experts. They’ll do anything to win it....

“Well, then... what exactly is it?!?! Perhaps ‘Mountain and Sea Mirror’ isn’t its real name!

“If the copper mirror is so mysterious and so powerful, then why did it end up broken?”

“Also... who broke it!? And why?!” One question after another popped up in Meng Hao’s mind, seemingly without any train of logic connecting them. After a long moment of thought, his eyes flickered with bright light.

“Regardless of what mysteries lie within the copper mirror, or where it came from, I have it now. Therefore, I will inevitably be involved in whatever quarrels erupt over it.

“Based on my current cultivation base, if something like that happens, I’ll most likely be killed. I wouldn’t be able to lift a hand against the people who want it. Therefore... the most important thing for me now ... is still cultivation!

“Only by becoming stronger and more powerful can I have a chance of surviving through whatever struggles are coming in the future! That’s the only way that I can ensure that my own Dao will continue on!” He closed his eyes and calmed his mind and heart. When he opened them again, he made a grasping motion, causing the copper mirror to fly into his hand. He looked at it for a moment, then, without any further hesitation, pulled out some spirit stones and Immortal jade and began to feed them into the mirror.

He did not give up on his original idea, which was... to duplicate the Paragon’s blood!!

“With enough Paragon’s blood, I can get a full, complete drop. Something like that is incredibly rare, and will help me... to successfully absorb that first Nirvana Fruit!”

He took a deep breath, and his eyes gleamed with passion. The path to the Ancient Realm lay before him, and the only way to be qualified to open the door to that path, was to absorb and fuse all four of the Nirvana Fruits he possessed. Then he could strike the Ancient bell and light his Soul Lamps. He would use the flame of his life force like the wind of the world, to extinguish each of his Soul Lamps in turn!

Thus he would achieve a Realm in which the lamps were snuffed out, yet

he still lived!

One spirit stone after another sank into the copper mirror. It was like a black hole that could gobble up spirit stones indefinitely. However, flickering light could be seen with each spirit stone it ate up.

As the rate of flickering increased, Meng Hao appeared calm on the outside, but his heart was twisted in knots. Although he was used to how the copper mirror devoured spirit stones, and also used to how he would often acquire a huge sum of spirit stones only to obediently feed them into the copper mirror...

Even so... he was still torn. His heart hurt, and gradually, he simply couldn't remain calm any more. All of the spirit stones he had acquired from the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire disappeared into the copper mirror, leaving his face completely ashen.

His eyes were bright red, and yet, like a gambling addict, he continued to throw in spirit stones. The copper mirror glowed with increasingly intense light until finally... a second identical vial of Paragon's blood's appeared!

He let out a long breath. He was shaken, but shook off the urge to mourn his spirit stones and looked the two vials over closely, then began to laugh uproariously.

If Granny Nine and the others could see these two vials, they would be shocked beyond belief. In fact, they might even go mad and unleash an unprecedented catastrophe.

They were identical. Both the vial itself and the blood inside were completely identical!

This was almost like creating something from nothing, a mystical scene of something appearing from thin air that filled Meng Hao's heart with incredible excitement. Also, he was now able to tell for certain that after acquiring that fragment of the mirror's face from the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, the duplicating powers of the mirror had actually become stronger.

Things that previously could not be duplicated, were now possible to

duplicate!

Meng Hao could even sense that one day, if the all the fragments of the mirror were brought together and the mirror was whole, then he could even duplicate the Heavens, or an entire world Realm! He could duplicate anything.

His heart pounded rapidly, and a brilliant gleam appeared in his eyes. However, at the same time, his heart remained vigilant. He knew that if anyone found out that he had this mirror, it would mean a huge catastrophe for him!

Actually, that was something he had long since been very well aware of. From the moment he had acquired the copper mirror and discovered its function, when he had first started down the path of cultivation, he had always borne that in mind.

After packing away the duplicate vial of Paragon's blood, he used the original to continue duplicating. Time passed by slowly. During the three days that passed, Meng Hao acted as if he were bedeviled, constantly feeding spirit stones and Immortal jade into the copper mirror.

Outside of the residence, the sound of singing echoed up into the air. The voices sounded disgruntled, and not very willing to sing, but Meng Hao didn't even notice it. He was completely focused on the copper mirror and the Paragon's blood.

When he ran out of spirit stones completely, he used Immortal jade. Eventually, he ended up duplicating seven portions of Paragon's blood. Finally, he ran out of Immortal jade. By that point, his eyes were crimson. He waved his hand, sending his identity command medallion flying out into the hands of the puppet boy, who by now had gone outside to wait for further orders. In compliance Meng Hao's divine will, he immediately flew away as if he were sentient. He passed through the shield and the pool it had formed to act as Meng Hao's representative in procuring cultivation resources from the Nine Seas God World.

The three old timers had promised Meng Hao that all of the resources in the Nine Seas God World were open to him. Although they hadn't agreed

to literally give him anything he wanted, it was still an unprecedented guarantee when it came to cultivation.

Not too much time passed before the puppet boy returned with a bag of holding. Immediately, Meng Hao resumed duplicating the Paragon's blood. He would do anything in his power to fulfill his desire of fully absorbing the Nirvana Fruits.

One day. Two days. Three days.

Time passed, and Meng Hao barely ever set foot outside. All he did was work on duplicating the Paragon's blood. Soon, he didn't have seven portions, but rather, fifty. That much Paragon's blood was something that even the Nine Seas God World would have a hard time coming up with.

Furthermore, Meng Hao had laid his hands on a virtual sea of spirit stones and Immortal jade. He didn't even calculate how much it was in total. Mostly because he didn't dare to. If he did, the pain in his heart would surely cause him to cough up a mouthful of blood.

"Still not enough!" he thought, his eyes completely bloodshot. He waved his hand, sending the puppet boy out once again to get some cultivation resources. This time, the puppet boy didn't come back as quickly as he had before. Meng Hao waited for a while, and when he still didn't return, had no choice but to rise to his feet. Just when he was about to walk out of the residence, his face flickered as he looked toward the leftmost stone chamber of secluded meditation.

Almost in the moment that he looked over, rumbling sounds echoed out from within the stone chamber. Next, the stone door shook, and a huge crack appeared in its surface, as if some incredibly powerful force were smashing against it from inside.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he used the power of the Life Death Hex to peer into the stone chamber. What he saw was that, where before there had been ten Ghost Eye Beetles, now there were none!

Shockingly, an enormous eye had appeared inside the chamber in their stead!!

The eye was surrounded by ten tentacles, which whipped around rapidly. There was also a black glow that radiated out from it, which repeatedly slammed into the stone door.

Upon closer examination, it was possible to see that inside of the Ghost Eye was a tiny pitch-black imp, sitting there cross-legged. The imp had no eyes, a huge mouth, and strangest of all, it had a black carapace on its back! 2

Apparently, the bizarre Ghost Eye was actually created by the black-shelled imp.

Meng Hao's eye widened as he also realized that, all of a sudden, his Life Death Hex was losing its grip!

Almost in the same moment that the Life Death Hex was weakening, a huge boom could be heard as the stone door collapsed. The Ghost Eye burst out, emitting a piercing, deafening shriek that echoed out in all directions. The Ghost Eye then proceeded to charge directly toward Meng Hao, as if to consume him!

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1. The title of this chapter is based on a Chinese saying about “an iron chicken from whom no feathers can be plucked,” referring to a stingy person.
2. In Chinese, a beetle is literally an “armored/carapaced/shelled insect”.

Chapter 1047: Magic Pod Soldiers!

The stone door collapsed further, transforming into a haze of fragments that blasted toward Meng Hao. Amidst the flying rubble was the Ghost Eye, screaming as it charged in attack. Apparently it wanted to consume or possess him.

There was also a blast of cold air from within the stone chamber. In his peripheral vision, Meng Hao could see that frost had built up inside, as if it were the dead of winter. Even more shocking was that the frost was green!

“It’s poisonous!” Meng Hao was a bit shocked by the weakening of the Life Death Hex. However, in the blink of an eye, he had recovered his composure. Eyes flickering, he did nothing to evade, but instead, waved his hand out in front of him.

Instantly, his Immortal meridians surged, and Immortal power erupted. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the stone door shattered completely, transforming into nothing more than ash. However, before it could dissipate, it began to spin around, becoming a whirlwind of ash with the Ghost Eye at its center.

The wind screamed around the Ghost Eye, seemingly on the verge of completely destroying it. After all, the wind was filled with Meng Hao’s Immortal power, which could even shake the peak of the Immortal Realm.

It happened so fast that it was already over before it could even be described with words. In the blink of an eye, the windstorm surrounded the Ghost Eye. In turn, mysterious light began to emanate out of it, not a beam, but a halo that spread out in all directions.

When the light met the windstorm, the windstorm was rapidly dissolved. A moment later, the Ghost Eye charged out, screaming as it closed in on Meng Hao.

“Interesting,” he thought. He could sense that the Life Death Hex was continuing to weaken, but actually, wasn’t really paying attention to that. Rather than try to reinforce the power of the hex, he wanted to see exactly

how strong the Ghost Eye was.

Before the Ghost Eye could get very close, Meng Hao took a step forward and raised his hand. A huge wind sprang up as he clenched his hand and punched out. It seemed like a simple punch, but it actually possessed the condensed strength of all of Meng Hao's true Immortal fleshly body, as well as his 123 Immortal meridians. That one punch was enough to completely eradicate anyone in the Immortal Realm.

As the punch rumbled out, the Ghost Eye screamed. It wanted to dodge, but was incapable of even moving. The only thing it could do was whip its tentacles up in an attempt to create a defensive barrier in front of it. At the same time, the Ghost Eye, which had remained open this entire time, now closed.

Shocking rumbling sounds could be heard as the tentacles were destroyed as easily as shriveled weeds. The Ghost Eye trembled and was sent tumbling backward. Its energy immediately plummeted, and it began to grow weak and dark. As for the black imp inside, it actually grew clearer.

A moment later, the Ghost Eye collapsed completely. However, the black-shelled imp wasn't hurt at all. It let out a piercing shriek and opened its mouth to reveal a collection of sharp teeth as it pounced toward Meng Hao.

"Eee?" said Meng Hao. His expression was one of excitement as he realized that the Ghost Eye, after having consumed so many spirit-immortal stones, and then transmogrifying, had a divine ability like this. It was actually able to resist the power of one of his punches.

As the black-shelled imp approached, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He did nothing to evade, but rather allowed it to close in on him. Then, when it reached him, the imp actually passed into his body, merging into him as if it were illusory.

At the same time, a powerful force of possession exploded out within him.

"Ah, so that's what's going on," he thought, his eyes flashing coldly. He

could clearly sense how the black-shelled imp inside of him was trying to destroy his soul and then take over his body, possessing him completely.

The power was overbearing, seemingly impossible to stop. However, a slight smile could be seen on Meng Hao's face. Now that he knew what the black-shelled imp did, he had no desire for further testing. He snorted coldly, and a magical symbol appeared on his forehead, which was the weakened Life Death Hex. Suddenly, it stabilized; how could a mere black-shelled imp permanently weaken the Hexing magic of the Life Death Hexing?!

As soon as the Life Death Hex solidified, a miserable shriek rang out. The black-shelled imp trembled as it was wrenched out from inside of Meng Hao to appear in front of him. It shook, and its miserable cries intensified until, after enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, it knelt in front of him, a pleading look on its face.

"As I suspected, it actually developed sentience!" he murmured. He waved his hand toward the black-shelled imp. Not daring to resist, it transformed into a black beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao's palm, where it then turned into a black bean-like pod.

It almost looked like a medicinal pill, and yet, had no medicinal aroma. Furthermore, there appeared to be undulations of life force inside of it. Meng Hao squeezed it hard between his fingers, but no damage was done. Apparently, it was extremely resilient.

It wasn't until he exerted seventy percent of his power that the black pod began to tremble. As cracks spread across its surface, a terrified stream of divine will suddenly shot out of it, begging for mercy.

After a moment of thought, he loosened his grip, then put the black pod into his bag of holding. Finally, eyes gleaming, he looked at the other two caves with keen anticipation.

"Similar to the peak of the Immortal Realm, huh.... And also sentient. That means that there's a high likelihood that they can continue to grow!

"Just a single black-shelled imp is far, far more powerful than ten black-shelled Ghost Eye Beetles. And the entire reason for the

transmogrification was those spirit-immortal stones!

“If I could get more of these blackpod imps, perhaps a few dozen....” Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly as he imagined a scene in which he waved his sleeve, causing massive quantities of black pods to fly out. After turning into black-shelled imps, they would possess his enemies, which would then assist him in battle.

“Magic pod soldiers!” 1 he thought, eyes shining. Next, he sent his divine sense into the other two stone chambers. In one of them, the black-shelled Ghost Eye Beetles were currently in the process of consuming each other. In the other chamber, there was only one beetle left, although it was currently sleeping.

Meng Hao could sense that it wouldn’t be very long before two more blackpod imps would be emerging from the stone chambers.

Muttering to himself, he summoned five more black beetles, which he placed into the chamber with the broken door, then fed some more spirit-immortal stones. Then he waved his hand, causing a glittering shield to appear that replaced the shattered door.

It was about this time that the puppet boy flew down through the water and the shield, and then entered the residence. He clasped hands to Meng Hao, and then handed over a bag of holding.

Meng Hao immediately looked very excited, and instantly put the matter of the Ghost Eye Beetles aside. He grabbed the bag of holding, scanned it, and then his brow furrowed. There were obviously far fewer spirit stones and Immortal jade inside than had been in the bag before.

Of course, it was better than nothing. It was still a hefty sum, even if it was less than before. Meng Hao waved his hand to send the puppet boy away, then sat down cross-legged and once again began to use the copper mirror to duplicate the Paragon’s blood.

Time passed, and Meng Hao’s life of sitting there duplicating with the copper mirror began once again. His eyes were bloodshot, and he continuously uttered vile curses. The copper mirror’s ability to consume spirit stones, and the pain that came along with it, was something that he

thought he had grown numb to. However, as it turned out, he was anything but numb.

Thankfully, his supply of Paragon's blood was growing larger. About a week later, he now had eighty portions!

During that time, he had sent the puppet boy out over ten times. Each time, he came back with fewer and fewer spirit stones and Immortal jade. Right now, Meng Hao was just looking up and taking a deep breath as the puppet boy returned again.

Unfortunately, this time the puppet boy had no bag of holding, only a jade slip.

When Meng Hao saw that it was a jade slip, he smiled bitterly. He'd already had a bad feeling about what had been happening, so he wasn't surprised when he picked up the slip, scanned it with divine sense, and heard the enraged voice of Ling Yunzi.

"No more! What do you do with all the spirit stones, boy, eat them?! Or do you just crush them into bits for fun!?!? It's only been half a month! Do you have any idea how many spirit stones and Immortal jade you've taken away!?!?"

"The Nine Seas God World has been saving up Immortal jade and spirit stones for countless years, and you've already sucked away ten percent!!

"Dammit! I know I said all the resources of the sect were available to you, but... but the way you're clearing us out is intolerable! No more! Until we open the Windswept Realm, we have no more! Do you hear me!?"

Meng Hao felt a bit awkward. Although the jade slip only contained divine sense, and Ling Yunzi hadn't come personally, Meng Hao could imagine how enraged he, as well as Granny Nine and Godmaster, must look.

"I don't want to waste so many spirit stones either," he grumbled. "It hurts me too!" He was also shocked at the wastage of spirit stones and Immortal jade, and it truly did pain him inwardly. He felt a bit wronged, actually. He hadn't actually calculated how much he had spent, not

because he couldn't, but because he was worried that if he knew for sure, he might pass out from the pain of it all.

"Besides, it was a measly ten percent, that's all! The Nine Seas God World is so mighty, and yet so stingy!" Clearing his throat, he continued to use divine sense to examine the message Ling Yunzi had sent.

"I bet you're not convinced, are you, kid? You think that ten percent isn't very much. Well let me tell you, you little whippersnapper, our faction only has access to forty percent of the total cultivation resources of the Nine Seas God World. The Demonic Cultivator Horde controls thirty percent, and the other two factions control fifteen percent each.

"If you want more cultivation resources, well, we can't give them to you. Go challenge the golden door stone stele trials by fire. Win some rewards there. Because you're in the Echelon, the rewards you can get will be double or more. When you win those rewards, the cost is divided out among all the factions!

"If you're skilled enough, then in the following two and a half months you can clear out all the resources of the Nine Seas God World, but at least then the other factions will lose out as well, not just ours!!" Ling Yunzi's last words were uttered through clenched teeth. Clearly, the last half month had been one long headache for him, Granny Nine, and Godmaster.

If Meng Hao weren't in the Echelon, they would most likely have long since descended upon him and slaughtered him and put an end to this no-good, spirit-stone devouring black hole of a glutton.

Meng Hao frowned as he retracted his divine sense from the jade slip. He looked over at the copper mirror, and then at his 80 vials of Paragon's blood.

"I still need twenty vials!" His eyes then began to shine with a frightening light, and a glimmer of obsession. For the sake of completing the Paragon's blood, and for the sake of fully absorbing his Nirvana Fruits, Meng Hao was even beginning to think about resorting to robbery and theft.

“I guess I should go check out the trials by fire!” With that, he clenched his jaw, rose to his feet, and walked out of the residence.

As soon as he stepped outside, he heard the sound of organized, choral singing coming from the pool of water.

“Come, come, sing with Lord Fifth. No singing out of key, now! Here we go! I was a bad kid when I was young, I’m a little seafood dish! Lalalalala! Seafood dish. Dobedobedoooo.... seafood dish.”

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1. This “magic pod soldiers” is actually a Chinese idiom based on a story where some magic beans turn into an army. Technically, what I’m translating as “black pod” or “blackpod” could also be translated as “black beans.” However... I’m sorry, but that’s just TOO goofy of a translation. I can’t stand the thought of Meng Hao having “black bean soldiers.” If he did, I would be tempted to add a line before he used them in which he asked his opponent “Would you like refried beans or black beans?” Besides, a pod is defined as a “two-valved seed vessel, as that of the pea or bean,” so I say it’s close enough. In any case, if anyone wants to write a fan fiction about these guys forming a band with Lord Fifth and going on tour, I can think of lots of great band names to go along with it.

Chapter 1048: A Wager!

As soon as Meng Hao heard the singing, he gaped. Looking over at the pool of water, he took a deep breath. His expression was one of shock as he saw 33 Demonic cultivators, haggard and gaunt, singing at the top of their lungs.

Their expressions were unexpectedly... that of extreme passion that even bordered on worship. As they stared up at the multicolored parrot, they almost looked like cultists. As for the parrot, it was belting out the song at the top of its lungs.

Most intolerable of all was that the meat jelly had transformed into a set of barrel-shaped drums, which were constantly being beaten to go along with the singing.

Meng Hao simply couldn't imagine what the Demonic cultivators had experienced to cause them to have such devoted gleams in their eyes. As for the singing, other than the little tune that Patriarch Reliance usually hummed, Meng Hao had never heard a more jarring melody.

He was also shocked to find that when he walked out of the residence and headed toward the pool of water, the Demonic cultivators, including the huge shell that hated him down to its guts, all completely ignored him, and focused wholeheartedly on their song.

Meng Hao felt as if the entire world were in chaos. He took a deep breath and looked at the hollering parrot, and suddenly realized that he had underestimated it.

Rolling his eyes, he cleared his throat and then produced Su Yan from within his bag of holding. As soon as she opened her eyes, she chuckled coldly, and was just about to deride Meng Hao when, all of a sudden, the singing caught her attention, and she gaped in shock.

"Parrot!" said Meng Hao decisively. "I'm handing this wench over to you for training. Get her to be as obedient as all these seafood dishes! Oh right, she's worth... one hundred furred or feathered beasts!!" Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, the parrot began to tremble in midair. It even

stopped singing, and all of the few colorful feathers it had left stood on end. Its eyes shone with brilliant light.

“A hundred? Did you say one hundred?!?!” It apparently wanted to make very sure that it had heard correctly.

Meng Hao nodded somberly. “One hundred! Each and every one with luxuriant coats of fur or feathers!”

In order to get his hands on that Daoist magic, he was willing to throw caution to the wind.

Su Yan gaped in astonishment. She wasn’t quite sure exactly what Meng Hao and the colorful bird were talking about. However, she quickly began to chuckle coldly, and her expression was one of extreme derision.

The parrot, however, was very excited, and instantly threw its head back and roared.

“Don’t worry, Lord Fifth will get this wench in line!” It looked excitedly toward Su Yan, eyes shining. Off to the side, the meat jelly didn’t seem to be very pleased at having been left out.

“Can you sing? Well? Can you?” it asked angrily. “Can you count?!?”

“Morons!” Su Yan said with a laugh, closing her eyes and ignoring them.

Meng Hao gave Su Yan a pitying look, then cleared his throat. Not bothering to consider how the parrot would be training Su Yan, he turned and flew up into the air.

In the blink of an eye, he shot through the shield and the pool of water, appearing suddenly in midair. Almost as soon as he emerged, he saw two beams of light flying through the air in his general direction. Within those beams of light, two cold gazes could be seen.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he watched two Demonic cultivators flying by.

They snorted coldly, doing nothing to disguise their contempt for him as they flew past and then headed off into the distance.

Meng Hao didn’t mind. The main reason he was emerging from his

Immortal's cave was for Immortal jade and spirit stones. Without further hesitation, he flew into the air toward the golden gate stone steles.

He did not intend to blindly challenge the steles. Instead, he would go learn something about them, then decide later which one to challenge first.

"I need to find the one most suited to me. That way, I'll be able to get the rewards I need in the shortest time possible!" As for his work with the Paragon's blood, he was determined to succeed.

On the way to the golden gate stone steles, he passed various disciples. The regular cultivators looked at him curiously. Some even smiled and clasped hands. After all, Meng Hao was famous even outside the sect, and earlier, he had talked down a Dao Realm expert. That news had caused quite a sensation in the Nine Seas God World.

However, the Demonic cultivators he encountered all bristled with killing intent. The hatred in their eyes was clear, and when they saw Meng Hao, it only continued to grow deeper.

Eventually, he came to stand in front of a towering golden gate stone stele. It shone with boundless golden light, and was carved with so many names that they seemed impossible to count. Quite a few cultivators and Demonic cultivators were gathered in the area. Any time someone touched the gate, they would disappear.

People would disappear and people would reappear. It was quite a lively scene.

A middle-aged man sat cross-legged at the base of the stone gate. His eyes were closed, as if he didn't care about what was happening in the world outside at all. However, if anyone attempted to start a fight in the area, or if people attempting the trial by fire tried to cheat in any way, he would instantly know, and punishment would be meted out without hesitation.

Meng Hao stood off to the side, watching the scene for a while. He was just about to leave when, all of a sudden, a glittering bright red light began to spread out from one of the stone steles. The light rapidly transformed

to the image of an illusory world up in midair. Within that world, a young woman could be seen, who was the source of the light!

She was beautiful, but shockingly, a white-robed female corpse could be seen floating behind her, making her even more astonishing.

Cries of envy and shock could instantly be heard from all directions.

“The name list changed!”

“Elder Sister Fan Dong’er got into the top 30!!”

“The top 100 are all Ancient Realm cultivators, although you can only make it into the rankings if you have five or less extinguished soul lamps. But Elder Sister Fan Dong’er got into the top 30 while only in the Immortal Realm! She’s definitely a true Chosen!”

Cries of shock rang out among the cultivators in the area, including the Demonic cultivators. Many people looked envious, whereas others had dark looks, or even seemed unwilling to accept what had happened.

At the same time, Fan Dong’er’s name appeared as the thirtieth name on the list.

The red light shone for a bit longer, then faded away. As it disappeared, Fan Dong’er strode out from the stone stele. Her face was a bit pale, but she looked excited. As soon as she appeared, the surrounding disciples began to clasp hands and call out in congratulations.

Fan Dong’er smiled and clasped hands in return. She was just about to leave, when suddenly, her phoenix-like eyes flashed as she caught sight of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao smiled and nodded, then turned to leave. He now knew that this stone stele trial by fire was about divine sense. Although Meng Hao was confident regarding his own divine sense, it wasn’t his strongest area. Furthermore, in previous encounters with Fan Dong’er, he could tell that the reason why her divine abilities and Daoist magics were so powerful was not because of her cultivation base, but rather, her divine sense.

“Perhaps it has something to do with the techniques of the Nine Seas

God World. I really should take some time to go to the their Scripture Pavilion.” After another moment of thought, he prepared to make his way off when all of a sudden, he heard the sound of air being shattered behind him. He turned to find Fan Dong’er chasing him down.

As for Fan Dong’er, she was muttering inwardly to herself that if it wasn’t for the fact that her master had instructed her to help Meng Hao familiarize himself with the golden gate stone steles, she wouldn’t have even approached him. Thinking about her battle with him after he reached Immortal Ascension caused her heart to fill with hatred. Back when he had first arrived and gotten into conflict with the Demonic cultivators, she had felt quite pleased, and had looked forward to the scene of the Demonic cultivators tearing him to pieces.

“Congratulations on reaching the top 30, Junior Sister,” Meng Hao said with a laugh.

“That’s Elder Sister to you!” she replied. Every time she looked at Meng Hao, she felt uncontrollable fury rising up within her. It was almost as if the mere sight of his face would put her emotions completely out of control.

“There’s only one Elder Sister in my life,” Meng Hao responded coolly.

When Fan Dong’er heard this, she gaped in surprise. Instead of pressing the issue, she took a deep breath, calmed herself, and then began to speak again, her face expressionless.

“The golden gate stone steles of the Nine Seas God World number nine in total. The first is the most important, which is a test regarding the pressure of the Ninth Sea. It is one of the most important trials by fire in the Nine Seas God World.

“The other eight gates test different aspects of cultivation. For example, the ninth stone stele is a fleshly body trial by fire. This, the seventh, has to do with divine sense.

“Then there’s the fifth stone stele, which is a trial by fire of slaughter. By experiencing a true battlefield, one can achieve the Dao of slaughtering.

“The third stone stele probably won’t suit you. It is regarding the Dao of transformation.

“Each person who enters into the top 100 on a golden gate stone stele receives a reward based on what rank they achieve. Greater rewards come as you go from the top 100, to the top 50, and the top 30!” Fan Dong’er rushed through the information, as if she was planning to leave right afterwards. She was worried that if she talked to Meng Hao for too long, she wouldn’t be able to control herself and would begin another all-out battle with him.

“What about the top 10?” he asked.

“Top 10? I suggest you don’t think that far ahead,” she replied, doing nothing to hide the derision in her tone.

“Don’t even dream of getting that high. Up to now in the Nine Seas God World, no one with an Immortal Realm cultivation base has ever gotten into the top 10.

“At the very least, you need to be in the Ancient Realm with two extinguished Soul Lamps to even compete over the top 10!

“As for you, you would be lucky to get into the top 20. You might be the Immortal Realm Paragon, but there are a lot of cultivators in the Nine Seas God World that you couldn’t lift a finger to.”

As Meng Hao looked at Fan Dong’er, his expression turned somewhat bashful, as if he felt a bit embarrassed about what he was going to say.

“You hit the nail on the head,” he said. “My goal is the top 10. Do you dare to make a bet with me about it?!”

Almost as soon as Fan Dong’er saw the bashful expression on his face, she felt like her scalp was about to explode. She instantly backed up, rotating her cultivation base and going on full guard, eyeing Meng Hao with extreme vigilance.

That expression was one which caused her heart to prickle, and it wasn’t the first time she had seen it. She knew that whenever such an expression appeared, Meng Hao would be at his most wicked. Not for the first time,

Fan Dong'er dearly wished she could bash his face in so hard that she never had to see it again.

"Well, do you dare?" he repeated, looking at her and blinking.

"There's no reason to try to convince me," she replied with a cold harrumph. "It doesn't matter what tricks you use, I simply can't believe that you could get into the top 10 of any of the golden gate stone steles!

"Furthermore, if you think there's any way I'll be making a wager with you, you can keep on dreaming!" Giving him one final derisive and scornful look, she turned to leave.

"If you win, I'll take Inky back," he said casually.

Those words caused Fan Dong'er to instantly stop in place. She shuddered, then turned back, her face a mass of murderous rage. She glared at Meng Hao, panting, chest heaving. She was fundamentally beautiful, but when she had a look like this in her eyes, she was even more attractive.

That corpse was something Fan Dong'er had gotten used to. She had viewed it as a way to temper her Dao heart. However, deep down, she would do anything in the hopes of getting rid of it. Not even her master could dispel the corpse, and so, her tempering had been because she had no other choice.

Therefore, how could she possibly keep her calm when Meng Hao said something like he just had? Furthermore, how could she be sure he could even do what he said?

Well-aware of what Fan Dong'er must be thinking, Meng Hao smiled and said, "I can, because I was the one who stuck you with her."

"YOU!!" Fan Dong'er gritted her teeth. "Fine, let's gamble!"

Chapter 1049: The Ninth Golden Door!

As soon as the words left Fan Dong'er's mouth, Meng Hao cleared his throat. For some reason, it didn't feel right to con her in this way. But then he thought about the situation with the Paragon's blood, and the vast amount of spirit stones and Immortal jade he needed, and he realized that he couldn't let even the smallest juicy prey escape his grasp.

"How many spirit stones do you wanna bet?" he asked her.

Fan Dong'er snorted coldly. How could she not tell that Meng Hao was confident in his abilities? Otherwise, he would never have mentioned the possibility of a bet. However, she was equally confident in being able to win, and in fact, was certain that she would. Meng Hao had never been to the Nine Seas God World, let alone entered the golden gate stone steles. However, she was very familiar with them, far more so than Meng Hao.

"Alright, Meng Hao, let's see who cons who this time!" she thought. Her expression cold, she pretended as if she were throwing all caution to the wind. However, inwardly she was actually feeling quite complacent. This time, it wasn't Meng Hao who had lured her into a bet, it was she who was pulling the strings.

At the same time that Meng Hao was scheming about her, she was scheming about him!

"In the interests of time, I'm only willing to bet on the first time you enter one of the golden gate stone stele trials by fire," she said. "If you tried them all, who knows how long it would take for you to finish.

"So, only your first try counts. You can select any one of the steles, and if you can get into the top 10, then I'll give you 100,000 Immortal jades and 5,000,000 spirit stones. Those are the stakes!

"Furthermore, you must make your first attempt at the trial by fire today! I don't have time to sit around waiting for you.

"If you get into the top 10, you can take everything immediately. If you can't, then you must swear an oath upon the Dao that not only will you

take this corpse away, you'll also cancel my promissory note! Plus, every time you meet me, you have to get on your knees and kowtow in greeting!" The way Fan Dong'er gritted her teeth and glared at Meng Hao made it seem like the reason she had added more stipulations was because she regretted her sudden impulsiveness, and was hoping Meng Hao would back out.

Meng Hao blinked and looked suspiciously at Fan Dong'er. Then, he slowly nodded his head.

"Alright, fine," he said. "We're old friends, so even though the bet is a bit unfair to me, I'll accept it, all because of our relationship. Let's do it!"

Fan Dong'er couldn't conceal the bright glow in her eyes as she immediately responded, "The agreement is reached..."

"...and the Dao bears witness!" replied Meng Hao, without hesitation.

Quite a few surrounding disciples overheard what was going on, and were watching closely. That was especially true of some of the male cultivators, who looked at Meng Hao with open hostility. Apparently, they felt that any enemy of Fan Dong'er was their enemy too.

When Fan Dong'er heard Meng Hao's response, she immediately smiled. Now, she no longer made any attempts to cover up her scheming, or the fact that she had been baiting Meng Hao. She was eighty percent certain that Meng Hao was going to lose!

When Meng Hao saw Fan Dong'er's expression, he smiled. Considering his years of experience as a con artist, how could he possibly have failed to notice that Fan Dong'er was leading him along?

He didn't immediately select a stone stele to begin a trial by fire. Instead, he transformed into a beam of light that shot back and forth between the other eight golden gate stone steles as he examined them.

Fan Dong'er followed along, as did other disciples of the Nine Seas God World, including quite a few Demonic cultivators. Many of those people sent messages to friends, and soon, word spread about the bet between Meng Hao and Fan Dong'er.

Fan Dong'er was the Divine Daughter of this generation of the Nine Seas God World, and was even famous in the outside world. There wasn't anybody in the Nine Seas God World who didn't know who she was. Couple that with the fact that she was spectacularly beautiful, and it would be impossible to say conclusively how many of her fellow disciples completely adored her. Naturally, the fact that she had a wager going with someone quickly drew a lot of attention.

Of course, Meng Hao was also famous in the outside world. In fact, his name was far more illustrious than Fan Dong'er's. Be it in terms of his identity or his accomplishments, he was the center of much attention. Furthermore, only half a month ago, he had stood up to and even berated a Dao Realm expert. Word of that had spread throughout the entire Nine Seas God World, which made the matter of his wager with Fan Dong'er that much more intriguing.

Demonic cultivators came. Ordinary cultivators came. It didn't take long before there were fully 10,000 cultivators following Meng Hao around and discussing what was happening. Most of them looked at him with curiosity. However, as would be expected, most of them were inclined to support Fan Dong'er.

Around noontime, Meng Hao finished his inspection of the nine golden gate stone steles, whereupon he hovered in midair, muttering to himself.

"What's wrong, can't decide which one to pick?" asked Fan Dong'er, sneering coldly. "Don't try to delay things, Meng Hao. We already made the bet. You can only do the trial by fire today!"

Meng Hao turned to look at her, then smiled. His eyes flickered with a cold gleam as, without another word, he shot away like lightning. Rumbling filled the air as he headed directly toward... the ninth golden gate stone stele!

The first stone stele was a test regarding the pressure of the Ninth Sea, something he wasn't ready for. After a bit of examination of the other trials by fire, he didn't feel extremely confident in his ability to win the bet in any of them. However, the ninth stone stele was a trial by fire of the

fleshly body. In that, he had faith!

Fan Dong'er's eyes flickered, and inwardly, she was laughing coldly. The ninth stone stele was actually one of three that she had speculated he would select. Therefore, it was no surprise to her at all that he chose that one.

"You're definitely going to lose!" she thought, setting her jaw arrogantly.

The surrounding disciples immediately began to discuss the matter.

"The ninth stone stele! This Meng Hao has a true Immortal fleshly body, so selecting this stone stele is actually a pretty conservative choice."

"However, he's also being a bit rash, wouldn't you say? The ninth stone stele... is very hard!!"

"Him losing would be a good thing. Deflate him a bit! After all, this is the Nine Seas God World!" Apparently, none of the disciples believed that Meng Hao would succeed.

Heaven and Earth rumbled as Meng Hao shot toward the ninth golden gate stone stele, a beam of prismatic light that split the air. As he neared, it was evident that there were already a large number of disciples gathered there, clearly aware of the wager between Fan Dong'er and Meng Hao. Their eyes glittered as they watched Meng Hao unhesitatingly speed directly toward the huge stone stele.

As soon as he touched it, he vanished inside.

Subsequently, the more than 10,000 disciples outside of the stone stele all fixed their eyes on the list of names as they waited for any change. Fan Dong'er chuckled coldly. She was very calm, and completely confident that Meng Hao would be defeated.

Inside of the golden gate stone stele was an entire world which stretched out in all directions. However, there was no sky or land, just blankness. Meng Hao frowned as he realized that his Immortal meridians were apparently sealed. He could not rotate them in the slightest, making it impossible to utilize any divine abilities or magical techniques.

“My magic has been sealed off?” he thought. He sent some divine sense into his bag of holding, and found that even it was affected; nearly all of the items inside were impossible to use. Apparently the natural laws in this place restricted anything related to magic.

There were a few Heaven-defying items within his bag of holding that were still available for use. Most shocking of all was that the black pod was still emanating ripples; apparently it was unaffected by the sealing, and could still be used.

Even as shock washed through Meng Hao, popping sounds suddenly rang out from up ahead. Next, a tall figure strode out from the within the void.

It was a man wearing a mask, with a long head of flowing white hair, and a navy blue robe. Not a single cultivation base ripple emanated off of him as he approached, causing Meng Hao’s eyes to widen.

He could sense that the man had a boundless power of qi and blood within him. Although he had absolutely no cultivation base fluctuations, his qi and blood power was towering.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he realized what type of cultivation this man practiced.

“A body cultivator!”

Back when he was doing research in the Fang Clan’s ancient records, he saw information about a common type of cultivation from ancient times. Those cultivators did not cultivate special types of magic, but rather, focused on their fleshly bodies.

People like that were referred to as body cultivators!

The most unique thing about them was that their bodies did not contain the least bit of spiritual energy. However, their qi and blood could influence the workings of the world around them.

The man in front of him hadn’t reached that level yet. However, his qi and blood were still extremely vigorous, shocking to the extreme.

As soon as he appeared, he didn't hesitate for even a moment. He strode forward, and before he was even close, his boundless qi and blood surged, transforming into an incredible pressure that crushed down on Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he couldn't help but smile.

"So I can't use any magical techniques. I can only rely on my fleshly body. Well in that case, it's time to see... exactly how far my true Immortal fleshly body can take me!" He took a deep breath, and without any further hesitation, began to stride toward the man.

As they closed in on each other, both of them clenched their hands into fists and punched out!

A boom rattled out. Meng Hao went all out with his fleshly body, giving rise to a gale force wind. When his blow landed on his opponent, a massive shockwave spread out in all directions. Meng Hao's hair was thrown into disarray, and yet, he didn't retreat even half a pace. The initial punch actually got him excited; it felt quite relaxing to be able to unleash such power.

As for his opponent, the man trembled, and fell back a few paces.

"Time to die!" Meng Hao roared, stepping forward and punching again.

The punch landed on nothing, but it caused the void to collapse, kicking up a huge wind that slammed into his opponent. The man's body shook, and in the blink of an eye, he was completely shattered into bits by the force of the strike.

However, in that same moment, two more men appeared within the void. They looked identical to the first man, with navy blue robes, and masks. Their qi and blood were also incredibly powerful, and they immediately charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao threw his head back and laughed. He didn't back up, but instead, went on the offensive. Booms filled the air as the two figures were destroyed. A moment later, four figures appeared, with even stronger qi and blood.

This happened over and over again. Meng Hao attacked repeatedly, and

a massive energy built up in his body. It was a domineering air, a courageous madness. Rumbling could be heard as the entire world was shaken.

4 opponents destroyed. Then there were 8. After 8 were destroyed, there were 16. After 16 were destroyed, 32 appeared!

After that there were 64, 128, 256....

Each and every time, their qi and blood were even stronger. Vast crowds surrounded Meng Hao, who only continued to laugh. He almost never came across a chance like this, in which magical techniques weren't important, and he could rely only on his fleshly body. Every time he launched a punch, wild colors flashed about.

Furthermore, his name began to rise on the stone stele's list!

Chapter 1050: Celestial Warrior!

Actually, Meng Hao's name had appeared on the stone stele in the instant he had slaughtered 64 enemies. Prominently displayed on the golden gate stone stele was a list of 1,000 names.

However, while the names of the top 100 shone with brilliant light, the names of those outside of the top 100 were darkened to the point where you couldn't read them clearly without using divine sense.

As for Meng Hao's name, when it appeared, it was in the 997th position!

On any other occasion, few people would have taken note of this. Most people only paid attention to the top 100. The 900 names below that might have their own bit of glory, but not enough to cause any sort of stir.

As of this moment, however, the 10,000 spectators who were staring at the stone stele immediately caught sight of Meng Hao's name and began to cry out.

"There it is!!"

"He's in 997th place!!"

"That was so fast! How long has he been in there?" Immediately, various disciples began to analyze the situation, and soon, they determined that from the time Meng Hao disappeared into the golden gate stone stele until the time his name appeared, less time had passed than it would take an incense stick to burn!

In fact, in the brief time in which they discussed the matter, his name leapt from the 997th spot to the 831st! And it didn't stop there. It leapt again, from the 831st spot to the 498th!

A huge commotion rose up, and everyone was clearly shocked. Everyone was staring at the stone stele, astonished at the progress Meng Hao was making. Based on his reputation, everyone was sure that he would reach the top 100, but what was causing such widespread shock was the speed with which he was moving up in the ranks!

He was rising so quickly that everyone was mentally shaken. When

fighting a hundred people, defeating them in a hundred breaths of time was a completely different matter than defeating them in fifty breaths of time. Furthermore, to be able to do so in only ten breaths of time was like the difference between Heaven and Earth!

That was how all of the disciples of the Nine Seas God World currently felt about Meng Hao. Although they could see no images of what was taking place inside the trial by fire, when they calculated how quickly he was moving up, they knew that he was bursting with momentum and energy.

Fan Dong'er's expression flickered, but quickly returned to normal.

"The real difficulty lies in the top 100," she murmured to herself, clenching her jaw. "He might be moving quickly in the early stages, but so what?!"

Back in the golden gate stone stele, Meng Hao was laughing out loud. His qi and blood surged like that of an explosive dragon. He advanced courageously, dispatching the blue-robed figures with constant attacks. They were like dried weeds in front of him.

After dispatching the 256 cultivators with boundless qi and blood power, Meng Hao's eyes glowed with obsession. He was panting a bit, but his heart was filled with the desire to do battle.

"I'm definitely... going to get into the top 10! Even if it technically shouldn't be possible for me, I can still do it!" He looked down at his bag of holding. Located inside was another item, which was the key to his confidence in being able to win the bet with Fan Dong'er.

This might be a trial by fire, and most of the items in his bag of holding were sealed. However, as Meng Hao had expected, the item that he was counting on could not be sealed. As far as the black pod, the fact that it was also unsealed had been completely unexpected.

Even as he stood there, panting slightly, the void up ahead rippled. Meng Hao was given no rest as a massive aura exploded out in front of him. Shockingly, 512 men in navy blue robes stepped out.

Each one was far more powerful than any of the previous enemies he had fought. Their qi and blood power placed them in a position similar to the peak of the Immortal Realm. However, these were not like Chosen with 90 or more meridians, but rather, more like peak Immortals with 70 meridians or so.

Even still, they were incredibly powerful. Meng Hao wasn't sure how members of the Nine Seas God World normally passed challenges such as this; perhaps they had a special body tempering technique. In any case, his eyes glittered as he stepped forward and went on the attack again.

Rumbling shook everything as he launched his punch. Massive vibrations could be sensed as he lost track of time, and even forgot that he was in a trial by fire. He focused completely on using his fleshly body to attack and destroy.

This was the first time he had not relied on any magical techniques or divine abilities, nor on his cultivation base. This was a battle fought only with the fleshly body. His entire body was trembling, not because of muscle fatigue, but rather, because it was finally able to utilize the full potential of its power.

In fact, Meng Hao could sense that, because of the constant fighting within the trial by fire, his fleshly body was now showing signs of a breakthrough, and was becoming even more powerful!

He roared as he shot forward, letting out a powerful punch that instantly exterminated three opponents. By the time he finished with the 512th opponent, blood was oozing out of his mouth and he was breathing heavily. Then he looked up and saw, not 1,024 opponents, but rather... a single person!

He wore a long crimson robe, and as he walked forward, the void around him turned bright red. That red color was not visible to the naked eye... it could only be seen with divine sense.

It was something that came only after reaching a certain level of qi and blood power, something that actually influenced the natural law around it!

As soon as Meng Hao saw this crimson-robed figure, his eyes widened,

and he could sense the threatening air exuded by the man.

“So, a true body cultivator has finally appeared!” he thought, eyes shining with the desire to fight.

From the qi and blood power emanating off of the man, Meng Hao was able to tell that he was definitely a match for the peak of the true Immortal Realm.

Meanwhile, everyone in the outside world was in an uproar. The more than 10,000 spectators outside of the ninth golden gate stone stele watched as Meng Hao’s name rose up on the list. It went from the 400’s up into the 300’s, all the way until it reached the 101st position!

As for how much time had passed since Meng Hao had started, it was only... a single hour!

To cultivators, a single hour was like nothing. And yet, that was how much time Meng Hao had used to climb all the way to the 101st position!

“This Meng Hao, just... just how powerful is his fleshly body?!?!”

“An hour! It’s only been one hour....”

“I suddenly have the feeling that he... might actually make it into the top 10!”

“Not necessarily. Maybe he used some type of secret technique to bolster his fleshly body for a temporary boost in power!” As the conversations went on, Fan Dong’er’s face was extremely unsightly. Although she didn’t want to admit it, she was actually getting quite nervous. For Meng Hao to get to the 101st position in only one hour was something extremely rare in the golden gate stone stele trials by fire.

Back inside, Meng Hao had no idea where his name was on the list, nor did he care. Because of that item inside his bag of holding, he was confident that he wouldn’t lose. Compared to what was at stake depending on whether he won or lost, the gains he was making in terms of his fleshly body were far more important.

Up ahead, the crimson-robed man stepped forward toward Meng Hao.

He only took three steps, but each step caused shocking rumbling like thunder to shake everything. Meng Hao's heart quivered as though it were being stepped on. He felt stifled, as if, when standing in front of this crimson-robed man, he couldn't help but feel regret.

But then, his eyes flickered with the desire to fight, and his qi and blood surged, instantly rising up to fight back against the feeling. He did not retreat, he advanced, directly toward the crimson-robed man.

The man looked up, and his eyes shone with a glow like that of blood. As Meng Hao closed in on him, he also charged.

The two did not speak, nor did they use magic. They simply... fought!

Booms rang out, shaking Heaven and Earth. Meng Hao launched punch after punch, as did the crimson-robed man. They went back and forth in midair, occasionally throwing sweeping kicks into the brawl. In a brief moment, they had exchanged hundreds of blows.

Meng Hao was laughing loudly. The more he fought, the stronger he seemed to become. It was as if his true Immortal fleshly body was undergoing tempering. It was exploding past his previous level of battle prowess, leading Meng Hao to the conclusion that he had overlooked the fact that his fleshly body could only grow stronger when he used it to fight! That was the key to growing more powerful!

Fight!

Meng Hao's desire to do battle surged. He attacked relentlessly, advanced without pause. The crimson-robed man seethed with qi and blood power, but was forced backward over and over again. It didn't matter that he was a body cultivator who had reached the point of being able to affect natural law; he was simply no match for Meng Hao's true Immortal fleshly body.

About a dozen breaths of time passed. Meng Hao roared, and then let out a punch that completely destroyed the crimson-robed man.

The world went quiet and peaceful, and Meng Hao hovered in midair, his qi and blood surging, growing more powerful. Shockingly, a red glow

began to spread out around him!

Apparently... he was able to influence this world's natural law!

As of this moment, Meng Hao looked exactly like a celestial warrior!

"I understand. Body cultivators need repeated bloody battles to progress!" His eyes shone with enlightenment. In any other situation outside, he could rely on magical techniques to kill the crimson-robed opponent as easily as turning over his hand. But he had no such access to magical techniques now, forcing him to temper his fleshly body. He was causing his true Immortal fleshly body... to burst out with the true power that it was capable of.

Almost in the same moment that the crimson-robed opponent vanished, Meng Hao's name once again climbed up on the list. He didn't know that though. What he saw was the void up ahead of him rippling as... two crimson-robed men emerged.

It was like a cycle, with 512 as the limit. Every cycle had different body cultivators, wearing different clothing, from different Realms of body cultivation.

2. 4. 8. 16. 32. 64....

There was no rest in this trial by fire. His fleshly body grew stronger, his insane desire for battle growing ever more frenzied. He coughed up blood, but it made him more powerful. Underneath the constant onslaught, his fleshly body gradually approached the point of perfection!

It was at the point when 256 crimson-robed opponents appeared that Meng Hao finally began to fall back. There were simply too many people, all of them body cultivators who could influence natural law. Meng Hao's fleshly body power was now reaching its limit.

His eyes flickered as they surrounded him, and he gave a cold harrumph. He was not averse to using cheating methods. However, he didn't want to use his final trump card so easily. Therefore, he tossed out the black pod. The imp appeared, screeching as it shot toward the incoming crimson robed opponents.

A group of crimson-robed men immediately split off to deal with the blackpod imp. The imp was ferocious, and didn't attempt to dodge. Instead, its carapace to defend itself. Although it wasn't really a match for these crimson-robed men, the more it fought, the more confident it got. When it was injured, the injuries healed. Whenever any of the opponents got near, it would attempt to possess them. However, it quickly became apparent that the crimson-robed men did not actually have the types of bodies that could be possessed. Therefore, the imp simply slashed them to pieces and consumed their flesh and blood!

In the end, the imp was able to take care of a dozen or so crimson-robed opponents, taking a bit of the pressure off of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was actually shocked at this outcome, and split his attention between fighting the crimson robed men and observing the little blackpod imp. Time went by, and after a few dozen breaths of time, the blackpod imp was struck by one of the crimson-robed body cultivators, and was sent flying. As it flew through midair, it spit out a mouthful of blood and then let out an ear-piercing screech.

"Dagger!!" As soon as it let out the cry, its body distorted, and it transformed into a dagger which shot toward the crimson-robed opponent.

Chapter 1051: Top 10!

Meanwhile, back in Meng Hao's Immortal's cave, rumbling sounds could be heard coming from within two of the stone chambers in his residence. It didn't take long for the two chambers to completely collapse.

Two Ghost Eyes suddenly emerged from within the cloud of dust. When they saw each other, sparks of hostility could be seen, but instead of fighting each other, they flew out of the residence, apparently intent on making their escape.

However, as soon as they emerged, they found themselves facing the parrot, who was in the middle of coaching the Demonic cultivators in their singing. The parrot stared in shock, and then immediately looked displeased.

"They look so familiar, but I can't quite place them. Anyway, why is their fur so sparse?"

"You fool, they don't have fur, those are tentacles!" Off to the side, the meat jelly jumped at the chance to correct the parrot. All of a sudden it felt as if it knew about everything in the world, which also caused it to feel superior to and wiser than the parrot.

"Well it doesn't matter if its fur or tentacles," the parrot responded angrily, "they just don't have enough! Come, come, you two, time to practice some singing with Lord Fifth!" It flew toward the two Ghost Eyes without any hesitation.

The two Ghost Eyes emanated mysterious glows, and without hesitation charged the parrot in attack. Shockingly, the two imps inside of the eyes opened their mouths wide, as if to possess the parrot.

They all slammed into each other, and surprisingly, the parrot wasn't hurt at all. In contrast, the two imps let out miserable shrieks. They had sensed some sort of terrifying aura within the parrot, and began to flee. The Ghost Eyes faded away, revealing the imps, which transformed into black pods as they shot backward.

The parrot looked very proud of itself, and was just about to start speaking, when the two black pods suddenly shrieked: “Dagger!”

It was a shrill sound, tinged with madness. Next, two black daggers shot toward the parrot.

The parrot gaped in shock.

“Black pods that become daggers? Pod daggers? They seem so familiar....”

Meanwhile, back in the ninth golden gate stone stele, the black pod in dagger-form stabbed into a crimson-robed body cultivator, causing him to instantly vanish. Unexpectedly, he was completely absorbed... consumed by the dagger.

Meng Hao’s eyes flashed, and he kept fighting. Not much more time passed before he was able to wipe out the remaining two hundred or so enemies. Then, the void up ahead rippled once again. 512 body cultivators appeared.

A new round of slaughter had begun. Considering how many people he was fighting now, it was impossible for Meng Hao to maintain his previous momentum. He began to edge backward, and yet, his expression was calm. Despite being forced backward, he occasionally looked over at the blackpod imp, who was battling with increasing courage. As it continued to absorb the body cultivators, it was beginning to emanate a sensation of qi and blood.

That caused Meng Hao’s awe of the imp to increase.

Outside, the more than 10,000 disciples stared in shock as Meng Hao’s name rose from 101st place to 97th, 85th, 78th, 63rd, 54th....

Finally, Meng Hao’s name appeared in the 46th position!

The golden light which shone from the name made it clear to everyone. Furthermore, in terms of time... Meng Hao reached that position only two hours after beginning the stone stele trial by fire!

Everyone was completely shaken by this. Furthermore, the glittering

golden light which rose up attracted the attention of disciples in other areas of the Nine Seas God World. They came over and began to ask about what was happening, and were shocked when they found out.

The Demonic cultivators were more affected than the ordinary cultivators. They stood there with grim faces and swirling killing intent.

As for Fan Dong'er, her face was extremely unsightly, and her hands were balled into fists.

“Considering the power of his fleshly body, he shouldn't have any problems making it into the top 30,” she thought, gritting her teeth. “But... why is he going so fast?!?!” Meng Hao had long since passed up her own name on the list, which was not unexpected. However, according to her calculations, Meng Hao should have taken a whole day to get to his current position. Instead... he used only two hours.

By now, many of the Ancient Realm experts had sensed what was happening in the ninth golden gate stone stele, and were sending divine sense over to investigate.

Inside the stone stele, Meng Hao looked around at the hundreds of crimson-robed cultivators who surrounded him, and sighed. Even with the assistance of the blackpod imp, it was not an easy thing to go up against the combined qi and blood might of these body cultivators.

“I wonder how high up I am on the list,” he thought. “Definitely not 1st. How did all those other people from the Nine Seas God World get so high in the rankings? How did they cultivate fleshly bodies more powerful than mine?!” Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

“Perhaps it has something to do with body cultivation itself, or perhaps... the Nine Seas God World has true body cultivators!” He hadn't been in the Nine Seas God World for very long, but even in that short time, he had made incredible gains. Not only had his fleshly body grown stronger, but he now had some clues about the path of body cultivation.

Were it not for that, he would have long since already reached his limit. Now, however, he felt that his power was just a bit lacking.

“Although I haven’t reached the point of needing to use THAT item, still... my fleshly body power just isn’t sufficient.” He took a step back, eyes glittering.

“In that case,” he said, taking a deep breath, “let’s see what types of body cultivators are here in this fleshly body trial by fire!” Although his Immortal meridians were sealed, and he couldn’t unleash magical techniques, he had sensed earlier that the secret magic of his Immortal meridians was still accessible.

His fleshly body was modeled after a single one of his 123 Immortal meridians. Therefore, he should be able to... transform all of his 123 Immortal meridians into fleshly body power.

He truly wanted to know exactly how powerful he would become if he transformed his fleshly body that way using the secret magic.

He closed his eyes, and the crimson-robed body cultivators closed in on him. When they were almost upon in, his eyes snapped open, and rumbling sounds filled his body. It was like a giant beating on a drum, intense booms that shook the entire world.

Inside his body, 123 Immortal meridians, despite being sealed and incapable of unleashing magical techniques, were not prevented from transforming into fleshly body power. Rumbling sounds could be heard as Meng Hao’s power exploded upward. Qi and blood power surged, and massive energy rose up.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE....

The incoming crimson-robed body cultivators were instantly smashed to bits by the surging energy. They became nothing more than ash that swirled around Meng Hao.

The blackpod imp let out a shriek and immediately evaded, looking back at Meng Hao with intense fear in its eyes.

All of the red-robed body cultivators were instantly destroyed.

Meng Hao clenched his fists and looked up, and his eyes shone with a bright light. Outside, his name instantly shot up from the 40’s into the

19th position!!

From ancient times until now, only eighteen people had ever performed better than Meng Hao, and they were all Ancient Realm cultivators with at least five extinguished soul lamps.

Furthermore, their fleshly bodies were not necessarily more powerful than Meng Hao's. After all, he had cleared the entire stage in only a few breaths of time, whereas many of the others had been forced to slowly kill all of their opponents.

The result was the same, but the process was vastly different.

The outside world was in an unprecedented level of uproar. The disciples of the Nine Seas God World couldn't believe their eyes when they saw his name leap from the 40's all the way to the top 20.

Meng Hao!

Fan Dong'er's eyes were wide, and she was panting with disbelief and shock. She even gasped.

"The top 20!!"

"Meng Hao got into the top 20! Only four hours to reach the top 20!"

"It's hard to say whether or not... he might actually get into the top 10!"

Boundless golden light rose up from the stone stele, catching even more attention. More disciples were arriving in beams of brilliant light.

Meanwhile, back in the world of the stone stele, Meng Hao hovered there, looking every bit like a celestial warrior. His energy was impossible to describe.

He was a celestial warrior, the Immortal Realm Paragon. And now, his fleshly body had also reached the level... of the Immortal Realm Paragon.

The blackpod imp was trembling as the void distorted up ahead. Soon, rumbling sounds could be heard as distortions could be seen, from within which emerged a black-robed man.

It was only a single person, wearing a black robe and a mask. However,

when he appeared, his explosive qi and blood power caused cracks to appear everywhere!

A terrifying energy rose up from him, which was the power of the peak of the Immortal Realm, a level of power equivalent to Meng Hao's before he had used the Immortal meridian secret technique. However, compared to Meng Hao's present state... this man's energy was far too weak.

Meng Hao advanced, extending his hand. He didn't use a fist, but rather, just waved his arm, causing fleshly body power to shake the natural law in the area. A huge conclave depression appeared, which immediately overwhelmed the black-robed man.

"Break," he said softly.

A boom could be heard as the black-robed man shattered. Next, 2 men appeared. Then 4, 8... all the way until 512 black-robed figures could be seen. Each and every one of them were crushed by Meng Hao.

His face was one of determination, and he attacked with lightning speed. The power of his fleshly body had already reached the pinnacle of the current generation, and even exceeded that of Ancient Realm experts. However, Meng Hao knew that this was not his most powerful state.

An even more powerful state would be one in which he could successfully absorb the four Nirvana Fruits. At that time, before he entered the Ancient Realm, he would have the most powerful fleshly body state to ever exist in the Immortal Realm from ancient times until now.

That would be... something that might even exceed the Immortal Emperor Realm!

512 black-robed men were smashed, causing Meng Hao's name to jump from 19th place on the stone stele to 5th!!

Outside, the crowd went wild.

"5th! Meng Hao got 5th place! The only people ahead of him are the legendary Four Celestial Warriors!"

"From ancient times until now, from the beginning of the Ninth Sea and

the Nine Seas God World, the top 4 of the ninth golden gate stone stele have never been surpassed. Those four names have always been there!”

“Those four people aren’t like Chosen from our era! They have been in that same spot for ages! Their record has never been broken by anyone!”

Chapter 1052: Passing on Body Cultivation Techniques

Fan Dong'er staggered back, her face ashen.

"He's cheating! He must be cheating!" she thought, her eyes completely bloodshot. In this particular instance, however, her accusation was completely unfounded. While it was true that Meng Hao tended to cheat and was even prepared to do so, at the moment he really wasn't.

His continuous fighting led to continuous advancement. As a result, his current fleshly body state was becoming increasingly powerful.

He hovered in the world of the golden gate stone stele, looking at the figures in front of him as they faded away.

Then, the void up ahead distorted, and a white-robed old man materialized.

The old man wore no mask, and he was alone. He seemed almost like the center of the entire world, and yet, no qi and blood power radiated off of him. It was almost as if he were a mortal.

However, he gave Meng Hao an incredibly enigmatic feeling. Deep down, Meng Hao also sensed an indescribable feeling of crisis that left him utterly shaken.

The old man looked at Meng Hao for a moment, and then suddenly spoke, his voice ancient and archaic.

"I am the final stage of this trial by fire," he said coolly. "Throughout history, there have only been four people under the Dao Realm who have been able to handle my first fist strike. Of those, two were able to withstand a second. Only one could handle three strikes!

"Anyone who can defeat me will find their reward from the golden gate stone stele increased tenfold! Unfortunately... no one under the Dao Realm has ever done that." As he spoke, he began to shine with a brilliant, golden light, as if his whole body had turned metallic.

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. He wasn't even able to gauge how profoundly powerful this old man was, but a sensation of danger flooded through him nonetheless. It was almost as if the person standing in front of him was not a cultivator, but some primordial wild beast!

Without even thinking about it, Meng Hao reached down toward his bag of holding.

The man looked deeply at Meng Hao and then said, "Do not attempt any other methods to achieve victory. Body cultivators grow more powerful by engaging in more battle, and making the heart invincible. If one resorts to trickery, the heart will be unstable. It might seem harmless at first, but in the end, your path will become more and more narrow, until you are unable to achieve true success in body cultivating."

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, and he was silent for a moment, as if having experienced a moment of enlightenment. The hand he had been moving toward his bag of holding slowly stopped in place. Finally, he looked at the old man, took a deep breath, and then clasped hands and bowed. When he looked up, his eyes shone with the desire to do battle. At the same time, his body surged with a bit more energy than before.

His energy even seemed a bit purer, as if some new willpower had awoken within him.

The old man nodded, his eyes shining with approval.

"First fist, Life-Extermination Fist!" the old man said coolly. Then, he slowly lifted his hand up and clenching it tight. It seemed like an ordinary fist, except that he placed his thumb between his middle and ring fingers. It poked out just a little bit, creating a small point of invulnerability!

As he punched, it was clear that there was no magical technique involved. However, a massive wind blasted out, so icy cold that it seemed to be a wind of total annihilation. As soon as the wind began to blow, the entire world turn gray, as if the fist could extinguish all life in the entire world.

Meng Hao even felt the flame of his life force flickering on the point of extinguishing thanks to the profundity of the fist. His heart trembled, and

he suddenly had the feeling that if a planet were struck by this fist, all living things on it would die!

An extermination of life!

This was the Life-Extermination Fist!

Meng Hao felt like he was suffocating in a cave of ice, and yet, his desire to do battle erupted. He formed his right hand into a fist, filling it with the power of his cultivation base, his willpower, and fleshly body power. His blood thrummed as he unleashed the fist of the Immortal Realm Paragon.

BOOOOMMMMMMM!

They met in midair, and when their fists slammed into each other, Meng Hao's entire body shook violently. He coughed up a massive mouthful of blood, and was sent staggering backward 300 meters. There, he coughed up another mouthful of blood, which was pitch black.

Furthermore, as soon as the blood sprayed out of his mouth, it immediately froze solid.

Cracking sounds could be heard as a layer of ice instantly spread out to cover Meng Hao.

A moment later, Meng Hao shook, and the ice shattered. He was pale and ashen as he looked over at the old man, shaken. The destructive power of that one punch was shocking to the extreme.

Furthermore, he could even sense that the old man hadn't used the full power of the fist.

"Extermination..." he murmured.

"The Life-Extermination Fist can exterminate all living things," the old man said coolly. "It can destroy any creature or being. This fist strike was created for the Dao of death. By attacking with a will of death, the body cultivator can murder Gods!"

Meng Hao's mind quivered as if struck by lightning. He took a deep breath, then closed his eyes and contemplated the meaning of the old man's fist strike. When the old man saw this, he looked surprised, and

gazed more deeply at Meng Hao. Finally, a look of praise appeared on his face.

Meanwhile, outside of the stone stele, the fact that Meng Hao withstood the first fist strike resulted in his name moving up again. Now, he was in 4th place!

Although it was only an increase of a single position, the fact that it was the top 10, or really, the top 5, ensured that the disciples of the Nine Seas God World were completely shocked.

Fan Dong'er's face was pale white. She knew she had lost, and yet wasn't willing to accept that. She still believed that the only way Meng Hao could reach his current ranking was if he had cheated.

Time passed. This time, four full hours passed before Meng Hao finally opened his eyes. Looking at the old man, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Understand?" the old man asked.

"Kind of," Meng Hao responded truthfully. "Well... mostly not."

The old man laughed heartily.

"Well, it doesn't matter. Why don't you try out my second fist strike, the Self-Immolation Fist, also known as the Bedevilment Fist!" As soon as he finished speaking, he took a step forward and raised his right hand into a fist. His thumb's position was normal, without the special finger positioning from the Life-Extermination Fist. It looked completely like a normal fist as he punched out.

However, as the punch rocketed forth, an energy rose up from the old man that caused wild colors to flash in the sky. A massive wind kicked up that could shake heavenly bodies. The energy itself caused blood to ooze out of the corners of Meng Hao's mouth, and he was shoved backward relentlessly, denying him any opportunity to counterattack.

That energy was the result of the old man's willpower, a madness and obsession that was capable of paying any price to fuel the destructive power of his fist. It was a level of obsession so high that it could turn one

into a Devil. Rather than an act of self-immolation, it was like a bedevilment!

The fist strike shattered the void, crushed Heaven and Earth, and... could not be reined in without shedding blood.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he staggered backward. He didn't even dare to consider a counterattack; he had the intense premonition that if he did... he would be destroyed in body and spirit.

There was something fatal about the power of that fist, and yet, even as Meng Hao fell into retreat, the old man roared, "Use what you learned of the Life-Extermination Fist, otherwise... you're dead!"

Meng Hao looked up, his eyes shot with blood, and took a deep breath. Then he clenched his fist, placing his thumb between the middle and ring fingers. Using what he had just learned about the Life-Extermination Fist, he punched out.

Beneath the power of the Bedevilment Fist, Meng Hao's life force was flickering out. A feeling of death filled him, and yet, he used that will of death to launch the punch. It was as if something in his mind snapped, and he achieved a higher level of enlightenment. His body trembled as... he understood the true, deeper meaning of the Life-Extermination Fist!

Everything was much clearer than before.

"I understand!" His fist, which was already flying through the air, trembled slightly. Then, it surged with a mad energy that hadn't been there before.

A huge wind sprang up, which, under the influence of his fist strike, transformed into a wind of slaughter. Everything around him iced over, and the power of extermination rose up, slamming into the Bedevilment Fist.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he spun backward as violently as a kite with its string suddenly cut. Great mouthfuls of blood were vomited out, and yet his hoarse, excited voice could be heard: "Life-Extermination

Fist! I understand! Life-Extermination Fist!!”

The old man smiled, returning his fist to his side as he watched Meng Hao fall and cough up more blood. However, Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed with intense focus and determination as he looked back at the old man and bowed deeply.

“Please accept my undying thanks for passing on this technique to me!” he said.

“You are not a body cultivator, and have not experienced baptism in the blood of a God,” replied the old man. “Therefore, you cannot withstand my third fist strike. Go. Wait until you have become stronger, and then come find me again. Remember, we cultivators didn’t originally practice body cultivation. The purpose of body cultivation... is to slay Gods!

“If you have an opportunity in the future to slay a God, then you can be baptised in its blood. At that time, you can acquire your own battle body!” The old man waved his hand, causing the world around Meng Hao to collapse into pieces. Meng Hao felt himself spinning, and everything turned into a blur.

At the same time, an unprecedentedly brilliant light shone from the ninth golden gate stone stele. Massive rumbling echoed out to fill the entire Nine Seas God World. All disciples of the Nine Seas God World could sense it, and especially the Dao Realm Patriarchs. All of them looked over as Meng Hao’s name rose from the 4th position... all the way to the 2nd position!

Clearly, the old man felt that Meng Hao was more qualified than the person who had previously reached 2nd place by withstanding the second fist strike!

The God World was in an uproar. All cultivators were shaking, and gasps of astonishment rang out in all directions.

“2nd place! Meng Hao reached the 2nd position on the list!!”

“Of the four celestial warriors who have eternally maintained the top positions, three were pushed aside by him!”

“He definitely deserves his positions of Chosen, Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, and joint Conclave disciple of the Three Great Daoist Societies!” As the crowds raved, Fan Dong’er’s face grew paler than ever.

Golden light shone up from the stele, and Meng Hao’s figure gradually appeared in front of all the crowds.

As soon as he materialized, he didn’t glance at anyone, not even Fan Dong’er. Instead, he turned and looked at the name which occupied the 1st position on the list. He very much wanted to know who it was that could withstand the old man’s third fist strike.

“Zong Wuya!” he murmured. 1

He might be someone from ancient times, and might not even exist in the Nine Seas God World anymore. However, Meng Hao still wanted to know his name.

Anyone who had never experienced the power of that old man’s fist strike would be eternally incapable of understanding how terrifying the Life-Extermination Fist and the Bedevilment Fist were to experts who practiced cultivation of the fleshly body.

As of this moment, Zong Wuya’s name was deeply imprinted in Meng Hao’s mind.

*

1. Zong Wuya’s name in Chinese is 纵无涯. zòng wú yá. Zong is a surname which is also a common character that has multiple meanings including “vertical, release, and jump.” Wuya means “boundless” or “limitless.” I often ask Madam Deathblade “What kind of name is this? What does it feel like?” When I asked her that question for this name she snorted coldly and said, “It sounds like an wuxia name”.

Chapter 1053: The Demons are Provoked!

At the same time that Meng Hao appeared, the disciples in the area were thrown into an uproar. Even the disciples who hated Meng Hao couldn't help but acknowledge that he was incredibly powerful. The position of his name on the ranking list on the ninth golden gate stone stele left a deep impression on their hearts.

2nd place!

From ancient times until now, the top 4 spots on that name list had never changed. On this day, however, Meng Hao had risen from the very bottom of the list all the way to the 2nd position!

Many people speculated that there must be a vast gap separating the 1st and 2nd positions on that list. However, only Meng Hao knew how vast that gap was. Perhaps after he completely refined the Paragon's blood, and then used it to fully fuse with a Nirvana Fruit, then...

He would be qualified to once again challenge the ninth golden gate stone stele, and feel... the power of the fist that came after the Life-Extermination Fist and the Self-Immolation Fist... the third fist strike!

That third fist would surely be spectacular to the extreme, capable of destroying Heaven and Earth. It was likely the pinnacle of body cultivation!

Refining more Paragon's blood required more Immortal jade and spirit stones. Now that he had reached 2nd place on the ninth golden gate stone stele, he would receive a hefty reward!

Meng Hao looked over at the stone stele, and the description of the rewards. After making some calculations, his eyes shone with anticipation.

A moment later, as the golden light slowly faded away, Meng Hao turned, flashing through the crowd like lighting toward the pale-faced Fan Dong'er.

"Cheater!" she said, glaring at him. Gritting her teeth, she pulled a bag of holding out and threw it over to Meng Hao.

She might have lost, but she could afford to lose!

At the same time, though, her revulsion toward Meng Hao grew even stronger. Expression extremely grim, she turned to leave. She was worried that if she didn't leave quickly, she would lose control and attack Meng Hao, leading to a big battle. Considering how terrifyingly powerful he was now, she knew that she had no chance of winning.

Meng Hao caught the bag of holding. After scanning it with divine sense, he smiled. In his opinion, Fan Dong'er's biggest weakness was also her biggest strength, and was something that he greatly admired. That was... she didn't refuse to accept losing, and could actually afford to do so.

Meng Hao cleared his throat. He was not the type to secretly spare people. If he had an enemy, and their differences could not be resolved, then in his opinion, there was no need to even try. And in fact... he might as well pile on a bit more discomfort.

Meng Hao had always been that way. Therefore, he smiled and said, "Junior Sister Dong'er, there are still eight more stone steles. I feel bad for winning so easily. Why don't we make another bet? What do you say?"

Fan Dong'er gritted her teeth. Not bothering to even turn around and look at him, she transformed into a colorful beam of light that sped off into the distance.

Meng Hao felt a bit bad. His words were actually somewhat perfunctory. He wasn't very confident about the other golden gate stone stele trials by fire. If Fan Dong'er had agreed to continue betting, he would have been forced to delay the matter.

Looking around at all the surrounding disciples of the Nine Seas God World, he sighed.

"Without a believable accomplice, it's hard to get things done. If I had someone to help, I might have been able to charge people to watch. Yet another lost opportunity for profit." Meng Hao's heart hurt at the thought of the spirit stones, which, although they didn't actually belong to him, represented a missed opportunity all the same.

“What a headache. Everyone else worries about cultivation, but I’m always worried about having to make money.” Feeling quite bitter, he shook his head and flew quickly over toward one of the other golden gate stone steles.

If he was going to challenge them, then he would need to study them individually. That would give him the best chance to maximize their profitability.

When Meng Hao left, most of the other disciples followed along with him. Soon, the entire group arrived at the eighth golden gate stone stele.

Shockingly, almost in the same moment that they arrived, nine beams of colorful light appeared up above, screaming through the air toward the same location. Shocking rumbling like that of thunder clouds could be heard, accompanied by the ripples of the Ancient Realm.

In the blink of an eye, the beams of light closed in on the stone stele to reveal nine Demonic cultivators!

Of those nine, seven were men and two were women. All were exceedingly attractive, and looked almost exactly like cultivators, with the exception of the fish scale mark they all had on their foreheads. Another shocking thing about them was that each and every one appeared to have three or four extinguished Soul Lamps.

These were obviously not ordinary early Ancient Realm cultivators. These were Chosen who were close to the mid Ancient Realm.

“It’s them! The nine Sea Realm Demons!! They’re actually making a public appearance! How rare!”

“Of the twenty most famous human disciples in the Nine Seas God World, the weakest is the Divine Daughter, Fan Dong’er, although she has the highest ranking. In addition to her, there are the nine Divine Offspring. They have profound cultivation bases, and although they were once Chosen, they’ve now entered the early Ancient Realm! The Demonic Cultivator Horde is similar. They have a Sea Daughter, who is analogous to the Divine Daughter. In addition, they have the nine Sea Realm Demons, who are similar to the Divine Offspring!”

Immediately, all of the Demonic cultivators in the area started getting very excited.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered when he caught sight of the nine Demonic cultivators. They looked back at him, their eyes flickering with sinister light. Each and every one of them could exert threatening pressure on Meng Hao; after all, they were all in the Ancient Realm!

There were two who Meng Hao found the most threatening. Both were men, one of whom had a triangular scale on his forehead, and whose pupils were also triangular, making him look very bizarre.

The other appeared to be the youngest among the group of nine. He was incredibly attractive, and wore beautiful clothing. His forehead had no scale on it, but rather, a mark in the shape of a Sea Dragon. He emanated the air of a ruler or king, that spread out in all directions.

He was... the number one Demon among the nine Sea Realm Demons!

Meng Hao looked away from them and proceeded to head toward the eighth golden gate stone stele. A moment after he stepped inside, the nine Sea Realm Demons did the same.

Countless eyes were fixed on the developing situation. The Demonic cultivators hated Meng Hao, a fact that had already spread throughout the entire sect. For the nine Sea Realm Demons to show up here led everyone to the same conclusion; the Demonic Cultivator Horde was making a move on Meng Hao!

It was not a direct attack, but rather, an attempt to keep his growing popularity in check, to use the trials by fire to prevent any further rise.

The contrast between them would be clear!

"I wonder what ranking Meng Hao will achieve this time!?" The surrounding cultivators were buzzing with excitement, and at the same time, were trying to maintain a balanced outlook. Although Meng Hao had proved how powerful his fleshly body was in the ninth golden gate, it was entirely possible that he wouldn't perform well in the others.

The truth of the matter was that was exactly how it was. After enough

time for an incense stick to pass, Meng Hao's name appeared on the golden gate stone stele, flickering with shining light. His name showed up somewhere in the 100s before he appeared outside.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao appeared outside, shockingly, nine names that were already in the top 20 positions on the list, moved up. Highest among all the newly risen was the name Long Tianhai. Earlier, that name had been in the 7th position, but it was now in the 4th!

"Long Tianhai! He's the number one Demon among the nine Sea Realm Demons. I can't believe he just got into the 4th position!"

"The Demonic Cultivator Horde is favored by the Ninth Sea. In terms of cultivation and enlightenment, they have it very easy!"

"Besides, they were actually born in the pressure of the Ninth Sea. Once they leave it, their cultivation bases will rocket up like mad!"

The spectators were in an uproar as nine figures emerged from the stone stele. It was none other than the nine Sea Realm Demons, who all looked over at Meng Hao with sneers that they made no attempt to cover up.

"So, the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan turns out to be pretty lame. You would think that with his cultivation base, he would at least make it into the top 100."

"That's the joint disciples of all of the Three Great Daoist Societies? He's too weak to withstand a single blow from one of us! He can't even make it into the top 100, and yet still has the face to walk around in the Nine Seas God World!?"

"You can't say that. Maybe he just doesn't care about the trials by fire. He just has an overinflated reputation that he can't live up to. If you had to blame anything, you should probably blame his arrogance and conceit!" The nine Demonic cultivators didn't hold anything back as they uttered various derisive and mocking words.

The disciples of the Nine Seas God World were shocked, and many of them felt that Meng Hao must be extremely weak.

“Fan Dong’er accused him of cheating in the ninth golden gate stone stele. From the look of things, he really was! Otherwise, how could there be such a huge gap now!?”

The results were clear. The nine Demonic cultivators went into the stone stele at the same time as Meng Hao, and had all placed in the top 20. The best of their group had even taken 4th place. In contrast, Meng Hao was in the 100s.

Normally speaking, if you didn’t compare him to others, placing the way he did would be exceptional. After all, he didn’t go all out, he merely went in to observe a bit.

Meng Hao looked coldly over at the nine Demonic cultivators, who stared back at him with expressions of blatant provocation and mockery. As for Long Tianhai, his expression was extremely calm. However, it was calm in an arrogant way, as if Meng Hao were an ant that he didn’t even need to think about, and could crush with a mere thought.

Meng Hao didn’t say anything. He knew that there was no way to patch things up with the Demonic cultivators, and therefore, he made no attempt to do so. In fact, he even felt a bit bad about it. After all, it was his bloody slaughter which had led to the whole situation.

He maintained his silence, and didn’t say anything in response. He turned and headed toward the seventh golden gate stone stele, followed by the nine Sea Realm Demons. They all arrived shortly thereafter at the seventh stone stele, after which Meng Hao entered. The nine Demonic cultivators followed suit, clearly hoping to humiliate Meng Hao.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao appeared. This time, he performed a bit better than before, ending up in the 90s. However, moments later, golding light shone up from the names of the nine Sea Realm Demons. Although they didn’t make incredible progress, there were some in the top 20. Long Tianhai didn’t make it to 5th place, but rather 7th. Another of the nine Demonic cultivators made it into the 9th position.

It was another clear contrast!

Next was the sixth golden gate stone stele, followed by the fifth, the fourth, the third, and the second....

The nine Demonic cultivators stuck as close to Meng Hao as his own soul. Every trial by fire he entered, they entered too. The result was that they completely exceeded him... and it was as easy for them as turning over a hand.

After every single trial by fire, they would utter some derisive words, the acidity of which only continued to grow. Their words were clever, and they made no effort to conceal the fact that they were taunting him.

Meng Hao's face grew icier. He didn't try very hard in any of the trials by fire, and as such, didn't allow their words to rile him. He knew that, for the moment, his level of power wasn't sufficient to exceed them.

All he wanted to do was observe the trials by fire and get used to them. It didn't matter if he only got into the top 100 or so. At the moment, he wasn't ready to truly challenge them.

Soon, he had passed through the rest of the stone steles. The final trial by fire tested one's ability to stand up to crushing pressure. After looking the stele over, Meng Hao decided not to challenge it, and turned to leave.

At this point, the nine Demonic cultivators started laughing coldly. Some of the other disciples of the Nine Seas God World were able to tell what was going on, and yet, the buzz that had built up because of his amazing performance in the ninth golden gate stone stele was now dying out. In fact, there were even people who were now suspecting him... of being a cheater!

Although Meng Hao looked like he wanted to leave, but it didn't seem that the nine Demonic cultivators were going to let him.

"Meng Hao, what do you say to a bet? Do you dare?" one of the nine Demonic cultivators taunted, the ridicule in his tone clear as his voice echoed about.

Chapter 1054: Little Haowie Needs To Be a Good Boy

Meng Hao was just about to leave when he heard the words and stopped in place, his heart thumping.

He slowly turned to look back at the nine Sea Realm Demons who had repeatedly done everything they could to provoke him. Although he was truly convinced that his own excessive killing had caused this irreconcilable conflict, the regret he felt was mostly gone thanks to the actions of these Demonic cultivators.

Sometimes, it doesn't matter who is right or wrong. Sometimes the only thing that matters... is who has the power to back up their words!

Only the powerful could back up what they said!

As soon as Meng Hao heard the Sea Realm Demon mention the word 'bet,' he thought for a moment and then smiled. It was a bashful smile, and a bit apologetic.

"I don't think that's a good idea," he said hesitantly.

"Cut the crap!" said the Demonic cultivator. "Do you have the guts to make the bet, or not!?" Immediately, the other Sea Realm Demons started laughing. As for Long Tianhai, he looked over with cool indifference.

They didn't know Meng Hao, so they had no idea that concealed beneath that bashful smile was a temper so violent that even words like conniption or paroxysm couldn't describe it.

"No bets for me!" Meng Hao took a deep breath and decided to take the high road for once. He once again turned to leave.

"So it turns out that the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan doesn't dare to make real bets," said the seventh of the nine Demonic cultivators. "The only thing he can do is bully Fan Dong'er!" His words were venomous and cold, and instantly put Meng Hao in a bad position with the other disciples of the Nine Seas God World.

“Crown Prince?! Pshhh, weak. Seems like the Fang Clan... is nothing special after all!”

“Don’t even mention the thing about being a joint disciple of the Three Great Daoist Societies. This guy is as cowardly as a mouse!” The Demonic cultivators continued to spew increasingly vitriolic words. Their taunts were reaching the point of being direct verbal attacks.

Meng Hao once again stopped in place and slowly turned around. His face was bright red, as if he was barely capable of containing his rage as he stared at the nine cultivators, panting.

“What a bore! This guy can’t do anything other than cheat! Useless! Even when making bets, the only thing he can do is bully girls! Screw him!”

“Alright, what do you want to bet!?” growled Meng Hao through gritted teeth. He glared at the Demonic cultivators and took a few steps backward, as if he were bracing himself to do something he didn’t want to do, but had no choice but to do.

The Nine Demons of the Sea Realm looked at him with cold smiles. The person to reply was the third Demon, a woman.

“Well,” she said, “obviously we’ll bet to see if you can get into the top ten of one of the other golden gate stone steles! Without cheating like you did in the ninth stele, of course.

“As for the stakes, let’s say 100,000 Immortal jades, as well as 5,000,000 spirit stones!

“If you can’t get into the top ten, you don’t have to pay any spirit stones, you just have to get the hell out of the Ninth Sea! And if you ever step half a foot back inside, you’ll be killed in body and spirit!”

Meng Hao’s face twitched slightly, and after taking a deep breath, he started laughing loudly.

“What piddly stakes! You want to bet with me like that? Fan Dong’er and I have a long-standing friendship that you don’t even know about. Our bet from before was just for fun! If you really want to make a wager, then you have to put up 10,000,000 Immortal jades!!

“Do you have the guts to make the bet, or not!?” Meng Hao spoke the words especially loudly. After pausing for the space of a few breaths without hearing a response, he started to laugh coldly.

“If you don’t have the guts, then forget about it,” he said, quickly backing up as if he wanted to take advantage of the silence to leave.

“You’re on!” Long Tianhai said coolly, his first time speaking. “However, if you lose, you’ll have to leave behind your four limbs for us as a souvenir.” His words instantly caused the other eight Demonic cultivators to look very excited.

“You....” said Meng Hao, appearing to be very shocked. His face was extremely grim as he stared back at Long Tianhai. Finally, he took a deep breath, gritted his teeth hard and said in a cautionary tone, “What I said was 10,000,000 immortal jades PER golden gate stone stele. With eight steles, that means that if I can get into the top ten of all of them, you’ll owe me 80,000,000!”

Gasps could be heard in the crowd, from both ordinary cultivators and Demonic cultivators alike. This was an incredible, shocking wager, the types of which were rarely seen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“80,000,000 Immortal jades.... Heavens! How many spirit stones would that be worth?”

“Enough to equal the life savings of an entire mid-sized clan of cultivators!”

“These people are crazy....”

Even as the crowd went into an uproar, the nine Sea Realm Demons were internally shaken by Meng Hao’s words. Even Long Tianhai’s face fell.

10,000,000 pieces of Immortal jade was a sum they could just barely scrape together. As for 80,000,000... that far exceeded their limit. Even for the Demonic Cultivator Horde as a whole, it was no small amount.

The other eight Demonic cultivators hesitated. Their plan to make a bet with Meng Hao had been come up with on the fly, and had quickly

reached the point that they didn't dare make any decisions unilaterally. All of them turned to look at Long Tianhai.

An unsightly expression could be seen on his face as he stared at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao seemingly sighed inwardly, and was just about to speak up as if he were going to give the Demonic cultivators a way out of the bet, when Long Tianhai's eyes glittered.

"You're on," he said. "However, we're going to change things a bit. If you don't get into the top ten of all of the golden gate stone steles, then not only do you have to forfeit your four limbs, you also have to give me... your place in the Echelon!" After the words left Long Tianhai's mouth, utter silence reigned.

Most people had no idea what the Echelon was. However, from the way the Three Great Daoist Societies treated Meng Hao, people could speculate. The matter of the Echelon was not something that could be kept secret forever, which Meng Hao knew. That was why he had taken the initiative to bring up the matter publicly earlier.

Sometimes a matter being public rather than secret can lead to certain unexpected advantages.

Deep in Meng Hao's eyes was a flickering coldness that no one could detect as he looked at Long Tianhai. They stared at each other for a moment, and within Long Tianhai's eyes, Meng Hao saw no trace of the coolness and disregard from earlier. Instead, he saw schemes and deceit.

"He was putting on an act earlier!" he thought, eyes glittering.

Finally, he smiled coldly and said, "Well in that case, I don't need 80,000,000. I want 300,000,000 Immortal jades! Add in one Dao weapon, and Meng Hao will take this bet with your Demonic Cultivator Horde!" Meng Hao's words were met with a chorus of gasps from the audience.

300,000,000 Immortal jades was an astronomical sum. It was terrifying even to think about. Even for the Four Great Clans it would be a

deleterious blow to be forced to hand over so much money. As for the Nine Seas God World, their reserves might be deep, but the Demonic Cultivator Horde only had access to thirty percent of the clan's resources. If they lost, it would be a severe blow to their foundation.

As for a Dao weapon, that was a magical item that only a Dao Realm expert could wield. Such things were rare in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and in fact, only three existed, one of which was in the possession of the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

If they lost the bet, and the weapon, it couldn't quite measure up to the value of a place in the Echelon. However, if they won... it would all be worth it!

The crowd was in an uproar, and the noise only continued to get louder. An incredible wager like this was enough to cause cultivators of all Realms to be filled with excitement.

The nine Sea Realm Demons all sucked in deep breaths.

Long Tianhai remained silent for a moment before a bizarre gleam appeared in his eyes. Considering that Meng Hao had mentioned the Demonic Cultivator Horde, he knew that Meng Hao had already pieced together some clues as to what was really going on.

However, he didn't care. What he wanted... was Meng Hao's place in the Echelon. Before Meng Hao had arrived in the Ninth Sea, he had put various plans in place. He had never imagined that one of the first things Meng Hao would do after arriving would be to immediately reveal publicly that he was in the Echelon. Now that many people knew about the matter, most of his plans were rendered unusable.

However, the stakes Meng Hao had mentioned just now were vast, and were somewhat imbalanced when compared to a place in the Echelon. It was a decision he couldn't make on his own, so he stood there silently for a moment, apparently conferring with someone. Finally, he gritted his teeth and looked over at Meng Hao, a gleam of determination in his eyes.

"The Dao weapon is off the table. But the 300,000,000 pieces of Immortal jade... we can do!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, Meng Hao sighed with relief. He had brought up the Dao weapon as a way to test out how determined the Demonic Cultivator Horde was. If they were even willing to put a Dao weapon on the table as stakes, then... he would have immediately declined the wager. No matter how much face he lost, he would never have agreed.

The fact that the Demonic Cultivator Horde refused to put the Dao weapon up as stakes revealed that there was a possibility that the result of the bet would be upheld. This matter most likely involved the machinations of a Dao Realm expert. However, Meng Hao knew that in all matters, risks had to be taken!

His eyes shone with a strange light as he looked over at Long Tianhai.

"This is a big matter. I'll give you my answer in a month!" Having said that, he turned and shot off into the distance. Waiting for a month gave him the option of both going on the offensive, or remaining on the defensive. Furthermore, it negated the previous comparisons that had been made between him and the nine Sea Realm Demons. Everyone was now completely focused on the matter of the wager.

Long Tianhai also realized this. He watched coldly as Meng Hao left, his eyes flickering with a gleam of killing intent.

Meng Hao transformed into a beam of light that shot back toward his Immortal's cave. After passing down through the water and the shield, the first thing he saw was the parrot, surrounded by the two trembling blackpod imps.

The parrot started singing, after which the Demonic cultivators chimed in.

"I was a bad kid when I was young, I'm a little seafood dish, lalalalala, little seafood dish, dobedobedoooo, little seafood dish...."

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment, staring at them, after which they switched to a different song.

"Come, come," the parrot shouted excitedly. "Last night Lord Fifth had a dream about another song. Once we get it down, Lord Fifth is going to

host a big singing contest for the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea! Alright, sing with me!" Off to the side, the meat jelly started to beat a drum enthusiastically.

"We're all seafood, our whole family is seafood! Righteous Lord Fifth, mighty Lord Third, lalalalala, we have to make the seafood be good! Dobedobedoooo, we have to make the seafood be good...."

When Meng Hao heard this, his mind spun, and all of a sudden the world seemed like a worse place. He felt bad for the Demonic cultivators, as well as Su Yan. At the moment, Su Yan seemed to be deeply shaken. She was staring at the parrot with gaping jaw, as if... the parrot had completely turned her world upside down.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and waved his hand toward the blackpod imps that seemed to be acting like backup singers next to the parrot. Instead of resisting him, they gladly flew toward him as if he were rescuing them from a disaster. Immediately, they transformed into black pods that came to rest on his palm, after which he stowed them away in his bag of holding.

The parrot didn't look happy. Glaring at Meng Hao, it said, "Come, come. Lord Fifth just thought of a new song. Let's all sing it together.

"Little Haowie needs to be a good boy...."

A brutal gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as he stared at the parrot for a moment. Then he ignored it, turning and walking back into his residence. The wave of a hand caused a sealing shield to appear that blocked out all of the racket from outside.

Moments later, the puppet boy flew out to go collect his reward from the ninth golden gate stone stele, and the smaller rewards for making it into the top 100 of the other eight stone steles.

Meng Hao sat down cross-legged, took a deep breath, and then gazed at the copper mirror with a look of anticipation.

"This time, I'm pretty sure I got enough Immortal jade to complete my work with the Paragon's blood!"

Chapter 1055: Which Paragon Did This Blood Come From!?

Not too much time passed before the puppet boy returned. Just as Ling Yunzi had said, a greater reward than usual was doled out to him and placed in a bag of holding.

He hefted the bag of holding, scanning it with divine sense for a moment before beginning to pant. He quickly retracted his divine sense, unable to bear looking at the contents. What was inevitably about to happen caused his heart such grief that it felt as if it were being cut in half with a knife. Therefore, he chose not to think about it.

This was a precious skill that Meng Hao had picked up recently. He sighed, gritted his teeth, and took out a vial of Paragon's blood to begin duplicating.

Time passed. Meng Hao's eyes were shot with blood and his hair was disheveled crazily as he fed Immortal jade and spirit stones into the copper mirror. Grimacing, he produced one duplicate after another.

Eventually, seven days passed. Meng Hao had now been in the Nine Seas God World for the greater part of a month. Finally, his bag of holding was completely devoid of all Immortal jade and spirit stones. And there in front of him was a collection of one hundred vials of Paragon's blood!

As he looked at the blood, he began to pant. He kept telling himself not to think about how much he had spent to get this much, and yet he couldn't stop himself. As soon as the slightest thought of it crossed his mind, his heart twisted into a knot.

"When I was young, I always wanted to be rich. After I started practicing cultivation, there were often times when I felt like a rich person. However, it always takes the mere blink of an eye for all of that to go away, and I'm destitute again." He wanted to cry, but no tears would come. He wasn't sure if his lifelong dream would ever actually come true.

After taking some deep breaths, his eyes filled with determination, and

he produced a vast collection of medicinal pills. He put them in his mouth, and refrained from chewing them. He merely allowed them to begin to slowly dissolve.

Finally, he waved his hand and caused ten vials of Paragon's blood to fly out. Cracking sounds could be heard as the bottles shattered, and the blood itself swirled out into the air.

Ripples began to spread out as he raised both and began to mold the Paragon's blood together into one glob.

After it did, a terrifying aura began to spread out.

"Parrot! Meat jelly! Get over here and help stop this aura from spreading out!" His words echoed out at the same time that the parrot was encouraging the Demonic cultivators to sing. After it heard what he said, it muttered a few sentences to itself, then flapped its wings and flew over with the meat jelly to help suppress the aura of the Paragon's blood.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he waved his right hand, causing ten more vials of Paragon's blood to fly out and shatter. The blood then merged into a larger sphere in front of him. The terrifying aura exploded out violently, spreading out in all directions, causing the residence around him to shake so violently it seemed it might collapse.

Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly, and without any hesitation, he waved his hand again. Ten more vials' worth of Paragon's blood collapsed and then reformed. The terrifying aura increased in intensity, and cracks spread out through the entire residence. It was at this point that the parrot arrived. It no longer looked calm and collected, but rather, let out a loud howl as it went all out to suppress the aura.

The meat jelly didn't seem very willing to cooperate, but it transformed into an enormous canopy nonetheless, which covered over the entire residence, completely preventing the aura from escaping into the outside world.

Because of Meng Hao's proximity to the the combination of thirty vials of Paragon's blood, the intense pressure caused him to shake violently. However, his eyes shone brightly with determination.

“Thirty percent!” he breathed. The pressure of the blood caused him to shake, and cracking sounds could be heard. His mind was spinning violently.

He gritted his teeth and waved his hand again. Rumbling sounds could be heard as ten more vials of blood shattered. The blood flew out to join the huge sphere; now it was roughly the size of an infant’s hand.

It was bright red, and shockingly, strands of gold could be seen swirling around inside, making it resplendently beautiful to the point where it tugged at the soul.

At the same time, increasingly intense pressure was cast out by the terrifying aura. The explosive power battered against Meng Hao, causing blood to ooze out of his mouth, and fissures to spread out across his skin. There was also a powerful expulsion force that threatened to cause him to explode.

His eyes shone brightly with obsession as he rotated his cultivation base, drawing on all the power of his Immortal meridians, using his secret magic to make them all Eternal. Their power surged in his body as he waved his hand again, causing ten more vials to fly out and shatter. When the blood merged into the sphere, terrifying aura erupted with further intensity.

The pressure was now so incredible that it caused Meng Hao’s entire residence to collapse into pieces. The entire structure transformed into nothing more than ash!

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth, and his hands almost shattered. His Eternal stratum surged at full power, continuously healing him, allowing him to fight back against the intense power.

The meat jelly roared and the parrot squawked shrilly as they suppressed the aura with all of their might as well.

Meng Hao was shaking, and his eyes gleamed with madness.

“Fifty percent!” He waved his hand, causing another ten vials of Paragon’s blood to fly out. When they merged into the sphere, he sent out

another ten, all the way until a total of eighty vials had been added together. It was now as large as an infant's head, and the pressure caused colors to flash, and the sky to grow dim.

Meng Hao felt like he was the subject of an intensely powerful attack. He was shoved backward, and blood spewed out of his mouth. His Eternal stratum worked like mad, but was incapable of keeping pace with the level of destruction, not even with all of his 123 Immortal meridians combined.

At this critical juncture, he didn't hesitate for even a moment to chomp down on half of the medicinal pills he had in his mouth. Immediately, they melted, flowing into his body with restorative energy. His Immortal power was once again restored, and he managed to bear the brunt of another aggressive blast.

The sphere of blood radiated resplendent light, as if the will of a Paragon were now awakening!

If it wasn't for the meat jelly and the parrot blocking the spread of the aura, the entire Nine Seas God World would be going completely crazy. The Ninth Sea would be aboil, and the entire Ninth Mountain would be shaking.

However, even though the aura still wasn't leaking out, the natural law in the area around Meng Hao was being affected. The air filled with distortions, as if another world were forming.

All of that... was because of the Paragon's blood!

It was not merely a single portion, but eighty portions that had been merged together. It hadn't even been refined yet, and was only an amalgamation, yet it was still a sample of Paragon's blood that was only a sliver away from being complete!

"I can do it!" Meng Hao roared, waving his hand. Rumbling could be heard as the final twenty vials of blood flew out. Half of them shattered, and the blood in them fused with the sphere. Meng Hao's hands were mangled masses of flesh, and he suddenly coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. However, a moment ago, he had crushed more of the medicinal pills in his mouth, causing their power to flow through his body and

stimulate his Eternal stratum into frenzied action. The mouthful of blood he had just coughed up didn't do anything to affect the fusion of the Paragon's blood.

The meat jelly roared with increased intensity as the canopy it had formed fought to control the aura. The parrot was in midair, squawking as it caused numerous streams of magical symbols to swirl down and seal the entire area.

"Dammit! This isn't the Demongranny's blood! She might be a Paragon, but this drop of blood was definitely not produced by her. How could an unrefined drop of blood contain such shocking power!?!?"

"The last ten vials!" Meng Hao chomped down on all of the remaining medicinal pills, then waved his hand to cause the final ten vials to shatter. Blood flew out into the sphere, which was now the size of an adult human head!

The sphere of blood contained innumerable golden threads that interlocked with each other, forming vague magical symbols that seemed to contain the origin of the starry sky, the Essence of the world, the basis of all life!

The meat jelly was shaking violently, and fissures snaked out across its body. It looked like it was about to collapse, and it was shrieking in pain. The parrot was getting very nervous, almost like he had during the unforeseen flare-up of the copper mirror.

"It's not the Demongranny's blood, and it's not old man Immortal Ancient's either!" the parrot shrieked, staring in shock and disbelief. "Could it be... could it be that this... no way. Impossible! Didn't he die? As soon as he died, all of his blood should have vanished from within Heaven and Earth! How could there be some left behind!?!?"

"Dammit! No wonder the mirror was acting so crazy! I thought that it was because someone was casting magic on it, but that was only one part of it! The other reason was because of this blood!!"

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he trembled violently. Despite the preparations he had made with the medicinal pills, his Eternal

stratum was reaching the point where it couldn't sustain him. All of his flesh was covered with cracks and fissures, which were widening, as if he might explode at any moment.

His body was slick with blood, but his eyes were completely focused. His hands trembled as he held the the sphere of blood between them and then shoved down hard.

"Refine!!" he cried. The sphere of blood gradually began to shrink and refine. As it did, more and more golden threads became visible, until, in the end, the entire mass of blood... was golden!

Meng Hao was shaking, and more cracks spread out across his skin. He felt the flame of his life force growing dim, all because of the vast pressure cast by the aura of the Paragon's blood. It was only a drop of blood, and yet Meng Hao was still no match for it. He was on the verge of collapsing. Even though the blood wasn't actually fighting him... it was still powerful enough to utterly exterminate him.

It wasn't just Meng Hao. Someone in the Ancient Realm, or perhaps even someone in the Dao Realm... would be slaughtered by this drop of blood!

Rumbling sounds echoed out, but Meng Hao endured. His body hovered on the brink of exploding as the mass of blood rapidly shrank. Soon, it was only the size of an infant's hand.

His body was covered in cracks and tears. His two hands were nothing but bloody flesh, disfigured and misshapen. And yet, his eyes still shone with laser focus.

"Refine!!" he roared. It was a roar like the final roar before death, and as soon as it left his mouth, the sphere of blood shrank down to the size of a fingernail!

As of now, it was thoroughly and completely golden!

The incomparable aura of a Paragon instantly erupted from inside the blood.

This was... true, authentic Paragon's blood!

It was complete, utterly rare, Paragon's blood!

You could even say that... it actually shouldn't exist. A drop of blood from the exact Paragon to whom the parrot had referred.

The meat jelly was screaming, and the parrot was bellowing in disbelief. Meng Hao was just barely managing to hold back from exploding when... an aura appeared which was not the aura of cultivation. It was... the aura of the League of Demon Sealers!

As soon as the aura appeared, the drop of blood began to tremble!!

A resonance was forming, almost like that of a bloodline!

"What...." Meng Hao thought, his mind trembling. Then he thought back to what Granny Nine and Godmaster had said to him. Paragon Sea Dream founded the Nine Seas God World and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite was founded by Paragon Immortal Ancient. As for the third Paragon, the most powerful Paragon, Paragon Nine Seals... nobody knew what he founded.

"He... founded... the League of Demon Sealers!" Meng Hao felt as if his mind were being struck by lightning.

Chapter 1056: The Mountains and Seas are Rocked!

This was... the blood of Paragon Nine Seals, chief among the three supreme Paragons!

Not even a single drop should even exist in the world. And yet, because of the even more mysterious and unfathomable copper mirror, this Paragon's blood had now appeared in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

In the instant that the blood appeared, it wasn't just Meng Hao who was shaken. The entire Mountain and Sea Realm began to tremble. It didn't matter that the parrot and meat jelly were covering up the aura with all their might. The aura still managed to spread out invisibly. Although nobody in the Nine Seas God World could sense it specifically, there were other beings in the Mountain and Sea Realm who did, and were completely shocked.

Nine great Mountains and Seas made up the Mountain and Sea Realm, outside of which was a sun and a moon that orbited eternally around it. It was because of those two heavenly bodies that the Mountain and Sea Realm had day and night!

At the moment, both of them were trembling, something that caused everyone, even the mortals, to stare up in shock to look.

As of this moment, people were trembling in shock in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the Eighth Mountain and Sea, the Seventh Mountain and Sea... even the First Mountain and Sea. In all the Mountain and Sea Realm, people were shaking in astonishment.

"The sun... is trembling!!"

"The moon is shaking...."

"What's happening!? What's causing this!?" Within the Mountain and Sea Realm, countless living beings were flabbergasted. Even the animals were prostrating themselves on the ground as if in worship. The mortals were astonished and began bowing down with looks of pious reverence on

their faces.

As for the cultivators, their scalps tingled as they observed something they had never before seen; the sun and moon shaking. It left them completely astonished.

Countless experts flew out, including all of the Dao Realm cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and the shock on their faces was clear.

Numerous beings saw the sun and the moon shaking visibly; instead of continuing on in their orbit, they were fixed in place, seemingly immovable. It was as if some unknown aura had caught their attention, causing their will to suddenly awaken.

At the same time that the heavenly bodies ceased moving, the Seas in the Mountain and Sea Realm all began to seethe and roar; the Mountains also began to shake, and were apparently roaring.

If you looked very carefully at the sun, you would just barely be able to tell that inside of that heavenly body, shockingly, was a sword!

It was a shining sword, shocking to the extreme. It was a sword that, in the past, had shaken the hearts of countless crowds of people, and had killed innumerable enemies.

That was... the sword of a Paragon! In the past, it had caused the entire Immortal World to tremble, and during the great catastrophe, it had rocked the 3,000 Lower Realms. The other two major powers in the war shook any time they heard the name...

Nine Seals Sword!

When Paragon Nine Seals perished, his sword went missing. Now, though, it suddenly appeared in the middle of the sun. Or perhaps... it wasn't just appearing there. Perhaps...

The sun of the Mountain and Sea Realm was the manifestation of the Nine Seals Sword of the past!!

Anyone who knew anything about the history of the Mountain and Sea Realm suddenly felt their minds reeling.

“The Nine Seals Sword! Heavens! The sun is actually the materialization of the Nine Seals Sword... how could this be possible!?!?”

“Impossible! This goes contrary to everything we know about history! How could this be happening!?!?”

At the same time, a massive aura was awakening inside of the moon. Just barely, an object was becoming visible inside of it!

It was not a sword, it was... a suit of armor!

A suit of armor formed from moonbeams!!

The armor shone with glorious light that was both soft and austere. It was as if the armor had been splashed with infinite amounts of blood, as if it had seen countless battles. In the past, the name of this suit of armor had rocked the world...

Nine Seals Armor!!

Paragon Nine Seals' two great Paragon artifacts!

All of the Nine Mountains and Seas were completely shaken!

“I just remembered a legend I heard about once....” Similar words were echoing in the minds of many of the Dao Realm experts of the Nine Mountains and Seas. It was a story that all of them had taken to be completely wild and absurd.

“According to the legend, each Mountain and Sea in the Realm will have a Mountain and Sea Lord to unify that area! But... the truth of the matter is that there is a position of power higher than that of the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas! A more powerful being... the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“The Lord of the entire Mountain and Sea Realm can exterminate a Mountain and Sea with a single thought, then create another one just as easily. That person will lead the Mountain and Sea Realm back to the former glory of the Paragon Immortal Realm!

“The legend says that when the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm finally appears, the sun and the moon will stop moving! Light will fill the

entire Mountain and Sea Realm! According to the legend... the nine Xuanwu turtles will kowtow and let out a massive roar!” Many of the Dao Realm experts of the Mountain and Sea Realm were murmuring things like this. In the Fourth Mountain and Sea, Kṣitigarbha’s eyes were shining with a strange light as he looked up into the Heavens and the starry sky.

It was in that moment that, all of a sudden, a massive Xuanwu turtle rose up from within the celestial pond atop the First Mountain, just like the Xuanwu turtle had done in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Apparently, all of the Mountains had a Xuanwu turtle like this as their nucleus.

The Xuanwu turtle opened its eyes, and it began to tremble, then let out a massive roar that filled the entire First Mountain and Sea.

That roar filled the hearts and minds of all cultivators who had been born in the First Mountain and Sea.

At almost exactly the same time, a similar roar could be heard coming from the Xuanwu turtle who sat atop the Second Mountain in the Second Mountain and Sea. Next, the same thing happened in the Third Mountain and Sea, the Fourth Mountain and Sea, and the Fifth Mountain and Sea....

Finally, the Xuanwu turtle from the Ninth Mountain and Sea joined in, and the roars combined into a unified sound that shook the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

Countless individuals were shaken physically and mentally as the supreme Xuanwu turtles, which represented all of the Nine Mountains and Seas, suddenly rose up into the starry sky, whereupon their roars reached a fever pitch.

In the end, all of them... did something completely shocking. They turned in the same direction and bowed, as if they were offering respectful greetings to their Lord!!

The direction in which they faced, shockingly... was the Ninth Mountain and Sea!!

The entire world was shaken, and the whole Mountain and Sea Realm was filled with rumbling sounds!

As of this moment, countless Dao Realm experts were thoroughly shaken. All of them turned to look in the direction of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. As for the Dao Realm experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea itself, they were dumbfounded.

The strangest thing of all was that no one could tell exactly which area within the Ninth Mountain and Sea the Xuanwu turtles were facing!

The roars of the nine Xuanwu turtles echoed out for a long time. The sound was archaic and icy cold, as if it was completely devoid of any emotion. It was almost as if... it were mechanical!

“The Realm Lord cometh... the Lord of all the Mountain and Sea Realm! The Nine Hexes shall be inscribed... in the moment of His return to power!”

The words spread out throughout all of the Nine Mountains and Seas, echoing into countless minds, giving rise to waves of intense shock. It was as if the entire world had been overturned. All cultivators of the Nine Mountains and Seas felt as if their minds were being struck by hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts.

“Realm Lord? The Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm?”

“What exactly is going on? What’s happening?!”

“Return? Could it be that when the Realm Lord returns, the fate of all the Nine Mountains and Seas can be controlled by just a single one of his thoughts?”

“The nine Xuanwu turtles are all facing the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Could it be... could it be that the so-called Realm Lord is in the Ninth Mountain and Sea?!?!”

Countless minds were sent spinning. On the four planets of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, in the Four Great Clans, the Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects, all of the Chosen were astonished, and were shaking in anticipation.

All of the Dao Realm experts could see that the Xuanwu turtle in their Mountain and Sea... was looking at their own Ninth Mountain and Sea!

It was the same in the Three Great Daoist Societies!

In the Nine Seas God World, Fan Dong'er, the Demonic cultivators, the three Patriarchs, and all of the other Dao Realm cultivators, were all shocked. Of course, none of them had any idea that all of these shocking events were being caused by someone within the Nine Seas God World itself.

Also astonished were the current Mountain and Sea Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas. All of them felt their energy surging, filling their respective Mountains and Seas with solemnity and a domineering air.

Lord Ji also appeared in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and massive pressure radiated out from that enormous eye.

These Lords... would not be willing to easily accept someone who was placed higher than them, a Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Meanwhile, in the Ruins of Immortality in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the white-robed Paragon Sea Dream sat cross-legged in meditation. Li Ling'er sat next to her in exactly the same posture.

Suddenly, Paragon Sea Dream opened her phoenix-like eyes, and her expression flickered. A shocked expression appeared on her face, and she rose to her feet and stepped forward. When her foot landed, she was outside of the Ruins of Immortality, hovering in the starry sky, looking toward the Ninth Sea!

"Big brother Nine Seals' Paragon blood...." she murmured. A tremor ran through her, and a look of utter disbelief could be seen on her face. After a long moment, she recovered her composure, and a strange gleam appeared in her eyes.

"The League of Demon Sealers. It's him...."

As of this moment, countless figures throughout the Mountain and Sea Realm were making various speculations as to who it was... that would bring such momentous changes in the future, the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Some people were prepared to respectfully welcome such a person.

Others prepared to kill and supplant him. Various thoughts rose up in various minds. In addition, many people left their respective Mountains and Seas to fly toward the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Everything was thrown into chaos in a single moment. An unprecedented commotion gripped all of the Nine Mountains and Seas!

Currently, Meng Hao sat in his mountain valley, experiencing the same shock that everyone outside in the Nine Mountains and Seas was feeling. He could also hear the cry of the nine Xuanwu turtles.

He was trembling, panting, his face covered with an expression of complete disbelief.

“The League of Demon Sealers.... I can’t believe it was actually founded by Paragon Nine Seals!!” Great waves of shock crashed through Meng Hao’s heart. Never would he ever have speculated that the League of Demon Sealers... had originated with such a shocking figure!

Furthermore, he was the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer! Nine was the ultimate number, and he was the final generation of the Demon Sealers!

“I’m the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, and this drop of blood comes from Paragon Nine Seals. He founded the League of Demon Sealers, which means... he and I are connected by destiny!” Meng Hao panted, and his mind trembled.

“The Nine Hexes shall be inscribed... in the moment of His return to power.... Nine Hexes. That means that when I possess all nine of the Demon Sealing Hexing magics, then in that moment... I will be the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!!” Meng Hao felt a bit dizzy. Even now, he found it... hard to believe.

However, he wasn’t struck senseless. In fact, in that moment, he was suddenly filled with a sense of impending danger!

Chapter 1057: Immortal Emperor Meng Hao!

Imagine a situation in which an empire has no emperor for many years. The regional government officials throughout the country have their own military forces, and occupy their positions for countless years.

Each one of those government officials will eventually come to view the area they control as their own kingdom, and themselves as kings!

That was the situation in the Mountain and Sea Realm, with the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas being nine kings!

The future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm was the Emperor!

None of those various kings would want to be ordered around after such a long time. After having a taste of freedom, they would balk at the thought of someone above them telling them what to do, nor would they accept the fate of being perpetually manipulated by another!

When such circumstances arose in an empire, then... the simplest and most effective way to deal with the situation, and also the method that would benefit most of the parties involved... would be to kill the Emperor before he had a chance to return to power!

That would be the best solution for all of those kings!

Meng Hao knew that, and because he understood it... he could tell how much danger he was in, and knew that he had to be completely on guard!

Under no circumstances could he reveal his identity. If he did... then the only thing that would await him would be destruction. And he would no doubt drag the Fang Clan down with him.

It was at this point that the parrot and meat jelly began to holler.

“Dammit, Meng Hao! Hurry up and absorb it! We can’t hold on much longer!!”

Almost in that same moment, Meng Hao unhesitatingly reached out and grabbed the Paragon’s blood. Then he took a deep breath and shoved the

drop of blood into the palm of his hand.

Instantly, the drop of blood merged into his hand, fusing into his body. At the same time, massive rumbling filled his mind. He could immediately sense the boundless, mighty power contained within the Paragon's blood.

Simultaneously, the aura of the League of Demon Sealers erupted wildly. Trembling, Meng Hao quickly pulled out a Nirvana Fruit and then pushed it down onto his forehead.

Rumbling echoed out as the Nirvana Fruit fused into him, and he began to shake. The Paragon's blood and the aura of the League of Demon Sealers merged together, causing its Paragon nature to be hidden away.

It was in this moment that a terrifyingly powerful stream of divine sense spread out from the Ninth Mountain. It covered the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, reaching out to any and all locations, leaving no stone unturned.

That included the Nine Seas God World. The divine sense swept over it, apparently willing to pay any price in its search, even offending the Three Great Daoist Societies.

However, the Nine Seas God World was uncharacteristically silent, and did nothing to prevent it from happening.

The divine sense covered over everything, swept through all regions. It even passed over Meng Hao, and yet, it did not seem to find the aura it was looking for. Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, all traces of the aura covered up. Of course, it was not his own power that was doing the covering up, but rather, the parrot and meat jelly, as well as the combination of the League of Demon Sealers' aura with the Paragon's blood.

Because of that, Meng Hao was not revealed underneath the powerful divine sense.

After some time passed, the divine sense faded away to search in other areas.

In addition to that powerful divine sense, the Dao Realm experts in other areas of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were also making searches in their

respective areas.

Everyone wanted to know... the identity of the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

It wasn't that nobody considered that it could be Meng Hao. After all, he was in the Echelon, and was the most famous cultivator of his generation. However... the position of Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm was far beyond his current level, so anyone who might suspect him would have only given it a moment of thought. The true object of most people's suspicion... were the people who were already in the Dao Realm.

The Lords of the other Mountains and Seas especially suspected Lord Ji. From the look of things, a massive storm was brewing!

Meng Hao remained in secluded meditation the entire time. After successfully fusing with the Paragon's blood, he used the power of the blood to absorb the Nirvana Fruit. At the same time, Paragon Nine Seals' blood caused his Demon Sealing magic to grow more exquisite. It was as if he had been the subject of... Righteous Bestowal!

He was the subject of Paragon Nine Seals' Righteous Bestowal!

It was like a form of approval, formally initiating him as the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer!

From this moment on, his Hexing magic would be even more powerful. Because of the amplification of the Paragon's blood, the pressure he could emit would be shockingly greater. Furthermore, his understanding regarding the League of Demon Sealers was now completely different than before.

For example, when it came to the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex, the Inside Outside Hex, he had only been able to open a tiny rift before. Now, however, he could open a rift that was hundreds of times larger!

Everything... was because of Paragon Nine Seals' blood!

Meng Hao was trembling. He could clearly sense that something was different about him. Absorbing the Paragon's blood was like a tempering or a baptism, causing his fleshly body to become more powerful, to exceed

the limits of the Immortal Realm. He was now extremely close... to having an Ancient Realm body!

All he needed was the right set of circumstances, the right opportunity, and he would be able to break through. At that point, his fleshly body would break into the Ancient Realm. Furthermore, he knew exactly where that opportunity lay; it was in the ninth golden gate stone stele of the Nine Seas God World!

Meng Hao could almost see what it would be like to withstand that old body cultivator's third fist strike. At that time... he would step into the Ancient Realm of the fleshly body!

"I'm GOING to get more powerful!" he thought, his eyes gleaming. He continued to sit there meditating, his Immortal meridians thrumming as the Paragon's blood seeped out into every corner of his body. Strands of golden thread quickly flew out to merge into his qi passageways.

As for the Nirvana Fruit which he had absorbed into his forehead, it rapidly melted, and when it touched the golden threads of the Paragon's blood, it fused with them, becoming part of Meng Hao.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's cultivation base shot upward. He was already the Immortal Realm Paragon, but it went higher than that, taking him... into the direction of the Immortal Emperor!

Every step forward he took, he made incredible advancements. He would now be permanently in the Immortal Emperor Realm, unlike before, when he could only be there for a short time by temporarily absorbing a Nirvana Fruit.

"Once I finish absorbing the Nirvana Fruit, I will eternally be within the Immortal Emperor Realm!" His eyes shone with determination. He had been waiting for this day for a very long time, and had spent countless amounts of spirit stones and Immortal jade to get here. He couldn't even speak aloud the tally of how much he had spent; anyone who heard the number would be unable to accept it, not even someone in the Dao Realm.

Because of that massive consumption, the path that Meng Hao traveled... was completely different from that of other cultivators!

He was treading the ancient path of the Paragon Immortal Realm. Because of that... his future was limitless!

Time passed. Days. Meng Hao sat there cross-legged the entire time. Eventually, about half of the Nirvana Fruit was absorbed, placing him beyond the level of the Immortal Realm Paragon and closer to that of the Immortal Emperor.

He was getting more and more powerful!

His fleshly body reached new heights of perfection, breaking through barrier after barrier.

Similarly, his powers from the League of Demon Sealers grew stronger.

You could say that the single drop of Paragon's blood led to an explosive growth in all aspects for Meng Hao, making him vastly more powerful!

Another two weeks passed. Meng Hao had now been in the Nine Seas God World for well over a month. Outside in the Mountain and Sea Realm, the fervent search for the future Realm Lord was still underway. There were even powerful experts from the other Mountains and Seas who made appearances.

Thankfully, everyone kept control of themselves, and no major issues arose. However... the sense of an impending storm continued to grow more intense.

During the half month that passed, Meng Hao felt divine sense sweep over his location four times. Fortunately, the meat jelly and parrot knew that Meng Hao was at a critical juncture, and did everything they could to keep him concealed. Also, from the moment that he had absorbed the blood, its aura had dissipated within him. Eventually, people stopped paying attention to him. Although he remained an object of suspicion, in truth there were over a hundred such people under suspect.

Actually, he would have been suspected no matter what the truth was.

Another half a month passed, and Meng Hao still wasn't finished absorbing the Nirvana Fruit. There was still about twenty percent left. However, the difference between his current cultivation base, and his

cultivation base before, was like the difference between Heaven and Earth.

Currently, he sat in place, cross-legged, completely motionless. Countless sparks of electricity danced around him, and although his eyes were closed, streams of white mist seeped out from between his eyelids, making him appear extremely mysterious.

His skin was whiter, and his aura explosive. Terrifying ripples rolled off of him. The Demonic cultivators in the pool of the water were in a state of shock, and when they looked at Meng Hao, terror filled their hearts.

As for Su Yan, she was also astonished by the changes she had seen Meng Hao undergoing. It left her terrified. To her, it felt as if some mysterious will were currently awakening inside of him.

“He has a terrifying aura,” she thought anxiously. “But what exactly is it...?” As far as she was concerned, Meng Hao was completely enigmatic.

Another half month passed. Meng Hao had now been in the Nine Seas God World for more than two months. Eventually, the day came... when he finally absorbed the last bit of the Nirvana Fruit. The last trace of it faded away into Meng Hao, and a tremor ran through him.

Along with the tremor were cracking sounds, and a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering energy. In that moment, his cultivation base rocketed up to new heights of power. A massive wind sprung up around him, causing the Demonic cultivators to shake. Su Yan’s eyes went wide with disbelief.

Meng Hao’s energy caused his hair to whip around his head, and his robes to flap. Gradually something formed inside of him, which was... an Imperial will!

It was domineering to the maximum, towering. This was the Imperial will of an Immortal Emperor Realm!

His eyes opened, and the Demonic cultivators could hear something like peals of thunder. There were eight thunderclaps in total, each one shocking to the extreme, causing strange colors to flash about, and making everything shake!

Blood sprayed out of the Demonic cultivators’ mouths, and some of

them simply passed out. Su Yan found blood oozing out of the corners of her mouth, and her face fell completely.

“Eight illusory thunderclaps, shaking the Heavens!!” she said.

“This... you... you actually reached THAT Realm. This is impossible....

“Those peals of thunder are a terrifying sign that will appear when someone reaches the absolute pinnacle of the Immortal Realm. Eight illusory thunderclaps, shaking the Heavens!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and slowly stood up. As he did, the aura of the Immortal Emperor suddenly erupted out of him, causing the entire Immortal’s cave to shake. Even the Ninth Sea was trembling.

“The limit of the Immortal Realm?” Meng Hao said coolly. “Apparently, you don’t understand... the meaning of being Immortal! The limit is far, far beyond this!” His voice was calm and filled with a threatening pressure that far exceeded anything that had existed there before!

Chapter 1058: The Echelon Reacts!

“Any further pinnacle is still just the Immortal Realm!” Su Yan replied through gritted teeth.

“You don’t understand,” said Meng Hao, shaking his head. The mark of the Echelon had appeared on his forehead, sinking deeper into him with each pulsing flicker.

Su Yan looked at the mark silently, her feelings clearly conflicted.

Meng Hao rubbed his forehead, then turned to look at the wreckage of his residence. All of a sudden, he had realized something, something that appeared in his mind after absorbing the Nirvana Fruit completely.

“The word Immortal is extremely profound....” he murmured to himself. He suddenly raised his right hand, within which was a second Nirvana Fruit. He looked at it thoughtfully.

“I can sense that the primary function of the Paragon’s blood was to provide true approval of me as part of the League of Demon Sealers. Paragon Sea Dream has her Echelon. However, I am the sole member of Paragon Nine Seals’ Echelon.

“The strengthening of my fleshly body, and the absorption of the Nirvana Fruit were side effects.

“Furthermore, after absorbing one drop of the blood, it wouldn’t matter if I absorbed hundreds or thousands more. They wouldn’t do anything. Also, I can’t continue to use Paragon’s blood to absorb Nirvana Fruits.

“Moreover... using Paragon’s blood to do so is a huge waste.” After a moment of thought, he probed his cultivation base to sense how vastly, vastly more powerful he was than before.

A month or so ago, he had been an Immortal Realm Paragon. Now, he was above that, an Immortal Emperor!

The current era had no such thing as an Immortal Emperor. In fact, even in the days of the Immortal World, the Immortal Emperor Realm was something rarely seen, like a level of complete perfection.

It represented a level of profound understanding of the Realm of Immortality.

Meng Hao might have only 123 Immortal meridians, but each and every one had widened and become extremely sturdy. The feeling of power he was experiencing was something he previously could only feel on a temporary basis with the aid of Nirvana Fruit. Now, he was eternally within that Realm.

The Echelon mark on his forehead glittered brightly, and was clearly more firmly implanted. Because of that, he looked completely different than before.

He even had a new strange feeling. If he closed his eyes, he could almost sense that, far out in the vast Mountain and Sea Realm, in other areas, there were... familiar fluctuations.

Those fluctuations were not coming from a specific person. Rather, it came from other people who... were like him! Members of the Echelon!

In total, there were twelve other members of the Echelon!

He was the thirteenth member, and the most recent one to be added. He was also the last member of the Echelon. Before him, there were a total of twelve. These were people from other locations in the Mountain and Sea Realm, whom Paragon Sea Dream had pulled into the Echelon.

Meng Hao had no illusions about how difficult it was to become part of the Echelon, nor how powerful its members were. After seeing the shocking and majestic sight of the first generation Patriarch, he could well imagine how powerful the other members were.

It was only after Meng Hao received the enlightenment of Paragon magic... that he had been able to join the Echelon.

Meng Hao could sense twelve fluctuations, and every one left him with a feeling like that of a Paragon. The level of power caused his heart to sink.

"Now I see. Before, my cultivation base and Realm simply did not qualify me to sense their existence. It is only now that I have reached the proper degree to do so.

“Furthermore, that means that as of this moment, not only can I sense them, they... can also... sense me!” He frowned.

By the time that Meng Hao frowned, the flurry of activity that had resulted from the events the previous month had died down. There were still many people who were paying attention to the situation, but the most tense juncture had passed.

Life went on. The sun and the moon went back into motion, almost as if nothing had happened. However, deep in the hearts of many people, questions still lurked about who the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm was....

In the Eighth Mountain and Sea was a location out in the void that was comprised of a vast field of skeletons that almost looked like puppets. Their eyes flickered with ghost fire as they swirled around. In the very center of all of them was an enormous palace constructed of bones.

Within that palace, a young man in a black robe sat there cross-legged, meditating. He was extremely gaunt, and his face was as pale as death, completely lacking even a trace of color. Furthermore, the flame of his life force was very dim. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and all of the skeletons surrounding the palace dropped down to kowtow. At the same time, a terrifying energy surged out from the young man.

A mark appeared on his forehead, flickering brightly. All of a sudden, he could sense something within the Ninth Mountain and Sea... the fluctuations of the Echelon!

“So, there’s actually a thirteenth member...” he murmured, and a sinister glow like that of blood appeared in his eyes.

At the same time, a massive vortex could be seen in the Fourth Mountain and Sea. A handsome young man in a blue garment sat cross-legged in that vortex, meditating. He was surrounded by ten old men, all of whom were at the peak of the Ancient Realm. Clearly, these men were the Dao Protectors of the younger man.

Roughly 3,000 meters away from him in the vortex was a young woman clad in a simple white gown. Her cultivation base was not in the Immortal

Realm, but rather, the Nascent Soul stage. However, there was an aura to her that ensured that, despite being inside the vortex, she wasn't harmed at all. She sat there, her eyes closed as she practiced cultivation.

Next to the young woman was an old lady who looked like a servant of some sort. She sat there quietly, completely ignoring the young man and his ten Dao Protectors.

After a long moment passed, the young man in blue opened his eyes and looked at the young woman in white. His eyes flickered with a mysterious light, and he suddenly approached her, after which he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Miss Xu, we meet again! I, Lin Cong, offer greetings to the 49th Princess of the Underworld!" 1

The young woman in white opened her eyes and looked at the young man. After giving him a slight smile, she closed her eyes again.

The young man smiled back, seemingly having taken no offense. However, when he turned away, a sinister gleam could be seen deep in his eyes. He was just about to leave when, all of a sudden, an Echelon mark suddenly appeared on his forehead, and he could sense that there was now another member of the Echelon in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"The Ninth Mountain and Sea huh.... He's much weaker than any of the others...." Killing intent flickered in the young man's eyes.

Similar scenes played out one after another in other locations in the other Mountains and Seas. Just as Meng Hao had suspected, the other twelve members of the Echelon were all able to sense him.

Competition was something that came with the status of being in the Echelon itself. Plus, there were also people in the outside world who wanted to kill those Echelon members and take their status for their own. Such an attitude was even stronger among the Echelon members as well.

To them, weak people weren't qualified to stand among them. Although nobody who was truly weak was allowed to even join the Echelon, any member who didn't make progress quickly enough would soon be left

behind, and eventually eliminated.

On the First Mountain was a young man with ordinary features. However, on his forehead could be seen a third eye. He currently sat in front of a Go board, holding a game piece in his hand, apparently lost in thought.

In front of him was a young woman wearing a long, emerald-green gown. She was so beautiful that it was impossible for anyone to compare to her. She had an alluring figure, and phoenix-like eyes that radiated a vigorous spirit. The wind slowly blew her long black hair, causing a single strand to gently sweep across her chest. The cosmetics she wore added a bit of color to her face, making her cheeks slightly rosy. She was both lithe and tender, and overall, completely attractive.

She was like a butterfly fluttering in the wind, or a fairy floating across the snow. She was the type of woman who, wherever she went, the flowers darkened, the sun and moon dimmed, and all other women somehow looked less beautiful.

She was also surrounded by Immortal qi, which slowly swirled around her, causing her to seem completely extraordinary.

“Elder Brother Chen, it looks like you’re going to lose this game too,” she said with a smile. It was a smile that made her consummate beauty even more attractive. The wind that was blowing past seemed unwilling to part with her, and instead, continued to swirl around her.

“The world is like a game of Go,” the man said lightly. “And life is like a dream. Each stone that is played must be played with extreme thought and precision.... Miss Xue’er, you truly deserve to be the number one successor of Immortal Ancient. You’ve experienced the wide world in your long travels, and the gracefulness of every step you take causes lotuses to bloom.” He looked up at the young woman and smiled slightly. 2

“Miss Xue’er,” the man said coolly, “among the twelve members of the Echelon, you came to find me first. Then you left to travel across the Mountain and Sea Realm, and now, you’ve come to find me again. It seems like I’m the chosen one.”

“Unfortunately, I can’t find anyone who can beat me at this game. Elder Brother Chen, among all the other members of the Echelon, you are the one who can hold out the longest. Since that’s the case, well....” The young woman lapsed into silence for a moment. Finally, she nodded, and was about to continue speaking when, all of a sudden, her expression flickered.

Simultaneously, the refined young man with whom she was speaking also looked surprised. An Echelon mark appeared on his forehead, and he was suddenly able to sense the fluctuations from Meng Hao in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“A new member. Too bad he’s far too weak.” After a moment, the man paid no further attention to Meng Hao. Instead, he looked at the young woman in front of him. Although his expression was placid, inwardly, he was a bit nervous.

The young woman didn’t say anything in response. She looked down at the Go board for a moment, then back up at the man. Finally, she stood up and waved her hand, causing the game board to vanish.

“Since a new member of the Echelon has appeared, I’m going to go extend greetings. I want to see if I’m connected to this person by destiny. Elder Brother Chen... if I have no destiny with him, then I’ll come find you again to discuss the Dao.”

“A person that weak... wouldn’t it be a waste of your time, Miss Xue’er?” the man said slowly.

“The first time I found you, Elder Brother Chen, you did not have the cultivation base you have now either.” The woman smiled, then turned and made her way off into the distance.

The man she called Elder Brother Chen sat there quietly for a long moment. Finally, a glow of self-confidence appeared in his eyes, which he then closed.

Meng Hao’s debut into the Echelon gave rise to a variety of intense reactions among the other members. At the same time, in the other Daoist Societies in the other eight Mountains and Seas, there were people who suddenly became aware that there was a new member of the Echelon!

A true member of the Echelon was difficult to produce. Someone who wasn't qualified to remain in the Echelon, and yet received an Echelon mark, would not be accepted. Meng Hao, after successfully absorbing his first Nirvana Fruit, finally... was acknowledged as being a true member of the Echelon. Also... he was now placed within the hearts and minds of the other members.

Currently, Meng Hao was in the Nine Seas God World in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. His eyes glittered, and he muttered to himself. Finally, he put the matter of the Echelon aside, and focused fully on himself.

“An Ancient Realm expert below five extinguished soul lamps would not be a match for me!” he thought, his eyes shining as he looked down at the Nirvana Fruit in his hand.

“I wonder if it would be possible to continue and absorb a second Nirvana Fruit. If I could exceed the power of the Immortal Emperor... I wonder what Realm that would be? The mere thought filled Meng Hao with excitement. He lifted the Nirvana Fruit up and, without any further hesitation, pushed it into his forehead.

RUMBLE!

*

1. This might cause some readers to recall what was said by Ksitigarbha in chapter 982.
2. The Xue in this young woman's name is 雪 xuě meaning “snow”.

Chapter 1059: Allheaven Dao Immortal!

In the current Mountain and Sea Realm, the pinnacle of the Immortal Realm was the Paragon. After opening 123 Immortal meridians and forming 33 Heavens, one could step into that ultimate Realm of Immortality. That was the highest place in the modern age.

Meng Hao was the only one who had currently reached that level, surpassing the achievements of the most powerful of the Mountain and Sea Lords, Ksitigarbha of the Fourth Mountain and Sea.

Perhaps with the assistance of various techniques and divine abilities, future powerhouses might be able to brush against this kind of power. But Meng Hao had reached Immortality by corroborating the Dao on his own. That was a higher level that no one could match!

However... although the Immortal Realm Paragon was the highest level in the modern age, in ancient times, when the Immortal World did not consist of nine mountains and seas within the Heavens and the starry sky, there was a level higher than that of the Paragon, and that was the Immortal Emperor!

The term Immortal Emperor was not just a title, but rather, a Realm. Before, Meng Hao could enter that Realm temporarily with a Nirvana Fruit. Now that he had permanently absorbed the Nirvana Fruit, his place within that Realm was stable and, in fact, eternal.

However... the Realm of the Immortal Emperor was actually not the ultimate level. Above that Realm were two more legendary Realms. Only a miniscule number of people had actually reached those Realms. Even in the heyday of the Immortal World, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than such a person.

Above the Immortal Emperor was the Allheaven Emperor Immortal. Then, above the Allheaven Emperor Immortal... was the Allheaven Dao Immortal! 1

It was difficult to become the Allheaven Emperor Immortal, and as for becoming the Allheaven Dao Immortal... that was EXTREMELY difficult!!

The Allheaven Dao Immortal was the ultimate and absolute peak of the Immortal Realm. It was a Realm that could overthrow experts at the peak of the Ancient Realm, and even shake powerful experts of the Dao Realm!

A person like this, who actually surpassed an entire Realm, was a superpower who, regardless of where they lived or what era they lived in, would be the complete focus of all attention!

Unfortunately, Allheaven Emperor Immortals were extremely rare, even more rare than members of the Dao Realm. Allheaven Dao Immortals were even rarer! In fact, throughout the entire history of the Immortal World, from ancient times til now, there had only ever been nine! As for those nine people, even the three supreme Paragons would treat them with courtesy.

That was because, according to the ancient legends of the Immortal World, Allheaven Dao Immortals were the root of the entire Immortal World! If a person such as that became a true Paragon... they would exist as the summit of the starry sky!

In fact, it was because Paragon Nine Seals had formerly been an Allheaven Emperor Immortal that he eventually became the chief among the Paragons.

If someone was able to become a Paragon via the path of the Allheaven Dao Immortal, that... would be something that had never been done, not from ancient times until now. It was vastly too difficult. When an Allheaven Dao Immortal entered the Ancient Realm, the likelihood of failing in extinguishing their Soul Lamps, and then dying, was vastly higher than other members of the Ancient Realm. In fact, it was almost a certainty. There was virtually no hope to survive. Because of that... it was essentially impossible to enter the Ancient Realm or step into the Dao Realm!

From ancient times until now, of the nine Allheaven Dao Immortals that had existed, five had died in the Ancient Realm, having failed to extinguish their Soul Lamps. As for the other four... they either died or went missing in the great catastrophe.

In the past, one of the Paragons had attempted to determine exactly how Allheaven Immortals appeared in the Immortal World, but were unable to turn up any clues. There was only one thing that was for certain... if someone had an ancestor who had already become an Allheaven Immortal, even just an Allheaven Emperor Immortal, then the chances of that person being able also succeed were extremely high!

Similarly, if someone had an ancestor who was... an Allheaven Dao Immortal, then that person was also much more likely to reach that same level!

It was almost like an inherited bloodline! In fact, it was said that if you searched through the most ancient of histories, you would find... that everything had its source... in nine family names! 2

Ages ago, the Paragon who had been researching the matter discovered that fact, and was instantly struck with fear, and gave up the research. It was almost as if there were some unfathomable consciousness attempting to prevent the truth from being revealed!

By now, many ages had passed since the destruction of the Immortal World. Before Meng Hao, no Immortal Emperor had ever appeared. As for Allheaven Immortals, they were naturally a thing of legend; in fact it was something that most people had already forgotten.

But now....

As soon as the Nirvana Fruit made contact with Meng Hao's forehead, a tremor ran through him. A tempest exploded within his mind, massive rumbling that made him feel as if he might explode at any moment.

His fleshly body grew larger. In the blink of an eye, he was nine meters tall. It didn't stop there though. He continued growing until he was fifteen meters tall, then twenty-four meters...

Even as he grew, he felt as if his flesh and blood were being ripped to shreds. He shook violently, and if it weren't for his incredible willpower, he would be screaming. Icy, painful sweat broke out all over his body, and blood oozed out of his pores.

The blood and sweat mingled together until Meng Hao actually looked like he was made completely of blood!

Despite the pain, an incredible fleshly body power exploded out within him. He could feel himself breaking through barriers, exceeding limitations. His heart pounded and his body shook as incredible power surged through him.

Those were just the changes to his fleshly body. A moment later, a windstorm spread out within him, causing him to stagger backward. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as the intense, terrifying windstorm caused his Immortal power to surge. He suddenly realized that his physical growth just now was only the beginning; the true change was happening to his cultivation base!

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

He staggered backward, coughing up successive mouthfuls of blood. He looked like he was completely made of blood, and the windstorm raged inside of him, making him feel like he was being torn apart. All of his qi passageways felt like they were about to explode.

The power was too intense, leaving Meng Hao completely shocked. It was as if this was not the power of the Nirvana Fruit, but rather power from... his bloodline. The Nirvana Fruit was only a key that unlocked the vast and terrifying power that was locked inside of his blood!

"This...." he murmured, alarmed. Massive rumbling filled him that no outsider would be able to hear. However, to Meng Hao, it was earsplitting. Next, he could sense that his 123 Immortal meridians were... all of a sudden fusing together to form only one single Immortal meridian!

That single Immortal meridian formed a framework inside of him that was a perfect circle!

As the circle formed, Meng Hao's cultivation base experience unprecedented, maddening growth. In the blink of an eye, he was far, far past the Immortal Emperor level. His surging energy and terrifying aura exploded to new heights.

As the rumbling echoed out, it eventually reached a point where Meng Hao couldn't handle it any more. He threw his head back and let out a terrifying howl. The howl gave vent to the tempest inside of him, sweeping across everything in the area. The wreckage of his residence was transformed into ash, and the stone chambers simply vanished. The parrot looked on with wide, disbelieving eyes.

"Allheaven Immortal! You're actually an Allheaven Immortal! Dammit, I can't believe you possess that type of bloodline, Meng Hao! Who is your ancestor!? Fang Clan. Fang Clan! DAMMIT! Why didn't I think of this before!?" The parrot squawked anxiously, flapping its wings and causing a protective shield to form over the shocked Demonic cultivators.

The meat jelly was also trembling, and it suddenly had an impulse to bow in worship to Meng Hao, an urge that could not be wiped out within the cycle of reincarnation!

Su Yan stared in shock, her mind reeling, and her expression one of extreme astonishment.

It was at this point that Meng Hao roared again, which caused an azure color to appear around him!

That azure color was the ultimate color, and was the most respected color in the Immortal World!

That was because azure... represented the Allheaven!

And the Allheaven... represented the infinite!

As of this moment, Meng Hao was radiating resplendent, azure light, as well as the Imperial will of the Immortal Emperor. An incomparably domineering air rose up from him.

If you likened the Imperial will of the Immortal Emperor to that of an actual emperor of an earthly empire, then currently, the explosive energy which radiated out from Meng Hao... made him so domineering that he could lord over a planet as if it were a kingdom!

In one moment, the Imperial will raged. In the next moment, Meng Hao's eyes darkened, and his body suddenly deflated. Based on the

explosive energy, if he took just a single more step, he would be in the Realm of the Allheaven Emperor Immortal. However, all of that energy suddenly faded away.

The second Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead and smacked down onto the ground. Meng Hao's body shrank back down from a height of roughly thirty meters, back to his normal height. His Immortal meridian also split apart and once again formed 123 separate meridians.

Everything went back to normal in the blink of an eye. Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and he doubled over. His vision began to go black, and he began to slip into a coma.

As he faded into unconsciousness, he smiled bitterly. Doing what he had just done was a bit rash. However, when he was able to experience the Realm available when he absorbed the second Nirvana Fruit, that level of power... filled him with excitement, madness, and desire.

He didn't know how much time passed before he woke up. When he opened his eyes, he saw the parrot and meat jelly, staring at him. They looked almost like they could see all the way through him, and their eyes were glittering brightly. They looked happy, even excited to see him.

"What are you looking at!?" he asked, gaping. The look in the meat jelly's eyes was the same look it usually got when it saw bullies. As for the parrot, it looked the way it did when it saw luxuriantly furred or feathered creatures.

Meng Hao's scalp tingled, and his face flickered. He looked down to see that his clothes were in tatters, but still remained covering him. He didn't feel anything strange anywhere in his body, so finally, he let out a sigh of relief. Although he didn't like to speak about the parrot's unique proclivities, inwardly, he was well aware of them and was always on guard.

"An Allheaven Immortal!" the parrot said excitedly. "Yowza! I never thought you would become an Allheaven Immortal!"

"Allheaven Immortal?" said Meng Hao, staring in surprise. Then he thought back to what it felt like to absorb that second Nirvana Fruit, and he smiled.

“Not a bad name.” With that, he stood up. Cracking sounds echoed out in all directions as his Eternal stratum went to work, rapidly restoring him to his usual state.

“Meng Hao,” said the parrot solemnly, “Lord Fifth assumed that you were like all the other masters of the copper mirror. All of the masters I’ve had have never been able to take the mirror beyond the first step and into the second.

“But now... if you can become an Allheaven Dao Immortal, then you can take the copper mirror into its second state! It can become... a Battle Weapon!!”

*

1. Allheaven is a term that came up once before in [chapter 1026](#), although at that time I translated it as Luotian Heaven. Luotian 罗天 is a concept from real Daoist mythology. Among all the various heavens that exist, it is the absolute highest heaven. Luo 罗 is a character which can be translated a lot of ways, but in this situation basically means “net.” The idea is that this heaven stretches out to cover over all the other heavens like a net. However, instead of calling it Net Heaven (sounds like a bad internet cafe or perhaps a fishing shop), I will use “Allheaven.” Incidentally, I’ve also translated the character Luo 罗 as “sieve” in the past, most notably in the name of the Black Sieve Sect.
2. I’m sure the reference to the nine families will cause some readers to recall [chapter 160](#), which happened to be titled “No Meng in the Nine Families.

Chapter 1060: Threats!

“Battle Weapon?” Meng Hao asked hesitantly.

“A weapon used in battle,” the parrot replied slowly. “A treasure that can seize the Heavens without magical techniques!” The parrot looked very solemn as it spoke. However, its next sentence revealed its true feelings.

“Obviously, it’s actually Lord Fifth that becomes a Battle Weapon. Hahaha! Keep working hard, Haowie. Lord Fifth hasn’t had a chance to be a Battle Weapon for a long, long time. I really miss that feeling of being able to penetrate all holes that I can lay eyes on....” With that, its eyes began to glow, and it shivered with so much excitement that it forgot to flap its wings and promptly fell out of the air.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and ignored the arrogant parrot. He looked over at the meat jelly, which was standing there, eyes burning with passion. Considering how uncharacteristically reticent it was being, Meng Hao could help but ask what was going on.

“Ah, you finally asked,” replied the meat jelly. “Seeing you as an Allheaven Immortal moments ago caused me to recall something from years ago. It happened long, long, long ago, so listen carefully as I explain.

“First, we need to start by clarifying some things that happened last year. Gradually, everything will become clear. Ahem... hey, no need to get anxious. We’ll go over things very slowly. My estimation is that I can finish explaining within three days.” It cleared its throat, tilted its jaw up, and began to speak.

A strange expression could now be seen on Meng Hao’s face. He was well aware that the Meat Jelly could only count to three. Furthermore, to it, the number three... was essentially limitless.

Based on Meng Hao’s analysis, the three days that the meat jelly referred to could be three days times a hundred, or times ten thousand, or even millions....

He coughed dryly and quickly sidled away. Turning toward the bare rock

cliff, he waved his hand, using a magical technique to carve out a new Immortal's cave. It wasn't a residence like before, but there were still plenty of stone chambers inside, more than eight.

A flash could be seen as he flew inside. The meat jelly's lips twitched slightly. Looking pained, it turned to the Demonic cultivators, and Su Yan, and its eyes suddenly brightened. It then hopped over innocently and stared at Su Yan.

"Hey there Fellow Daoist, would you like to hear my story?"

"Huh?" Su Yan was still shaken by everything that had occurred just now with Meng Hao. Her mind was still reeling, so she didn't even think before responding to the meat jelly. The meat jelly was instantly very excited. A pop could be heard as it transformed into a tiny bell-shaped hair clip which flew up and attached itself to Su Yan, where it hung down next to her ear.

It sighed, and then began to speak. "Let's start with that huge rainstorm from last year. Lord Third happens to remember being very curious about the rain that day. He really wanted to know exactly how many raindrops were falling. So, Lord Third started counting. One, two, three, one, two, three...."

Gradually, Su Yan began to tremble, and her facial expression slowly changed. Soon, blue veins popped out on her forehead as the meat jelly continued to count, saying the words "one, two, three" over and over again.

"Dammit, get off of me!" she growled, grabbing the meat jelly and throwing onto the ground. Unfortunately for her, her cultivation base was sealed, so she was no match whatsoever for the meat jelly.... As for the meat jelly, it wasn't afraid of being spoken to, regardless of what was being said; it only feared being ignored. Seeing that Su Yan was suddenly engaging it in conversation, it got very excited. It quickly picked a new position and continued speaking.

The parrot rolled its eyes. In its opinion, the meat jelly didn't set its ambitions high enough. The parrot flew up into the air and began circling around the Demonic cultivators as it went back to teaching them to sing.

A moment later, the sound of music filled the entire valley.

“I was a bad kid when I was young, I’m a little seafood dish, lalalalala, little seafood dish, dobedobedoooo, little seafood dish....”

The parrot and meat jelly were both very happy. Seven days went by. Meng Hao had now been in the Nine Seas God World for more than two months. The appointed date to enter the Windswept Realm was now only about twenty days away.

Four days earlier, two jade slips had arrived in quick succession. They were obviously imbued with incredible power, as they passed directly through the walls of his Immortal’s cave to stop in front of him, hovering and flickering with brilliant light.

After they floated down onto his palm, he glanced at them and then simply continued to meditate, ignoring the jade slips. He did not duplicate Paragon’s blood, but rather, spent the time getting accustomed to his new cultivation base, and how it affected his various divine abilities and magical techniques.

At the same time, he sent numerous Ghost Eye Beetles into the surrounding stone chambers and waited for them to transform into the blackpod imps.

By the time the seven days were up, he had eight new blackpod imps, putting the total number that he had under his control at ten.

“If I transform all of the black beetles, I should have about fifty black pods.... It’s kind of a small number, but it still qualifies as a small army.” He put the black pods away, then quickly carved out some more stone chambers, into which he threw more black beetles to begin their transmogrification. Finally, he ended his seven days of secluded meditation.

“I’m much more comfortable with the Immortal Emperor Realm,” he thought. “I just need to have a bit of practice with some of my magical techniques and divine abilities, and I’ll be good to go.” The rise in his cultivation base had been significant. Although it wasn’t quite the same as going from the Spirit Realm into the Immortal Realm, it was still a

massive leap upward. A mere seven days wasn't enough time to get completely familiar with his new state. He needed experience in battle to fully appreciate all the differences.

Finally, his gaze came to fall on the jade slips that had arrived a few days before. He picked them up and scanned them with divine sense, after which his eyes glowed with a cold light, and he started to chuckle.

The first jade slip came from the Nine Seas God World's Department of Tasks and Missions. The God World Department of Tasks and Missions was a part of the sect specifically devoted to giving various assignments to disciples. The assignments were arranged into grades, with the highest grade assignments being the type that you couldn't refuse to accept.

Of course, most such assignments were essentially given out as trials by fire. Although they were often dangerous, they would never exceed the capabilities of the disciples they were assigned to. Disciples needed to have a chance to go out and participate in real, live battles. On the other hand, safety was also a priority.

The first jade slip was exactly that type of assignment, something that could not be refused.

"A bloodthirsty cultivator has appeared on Seajacket Island," Meng Hao murmured as he studied the information. "He has murdered other cultivators and slaughtered numerous sea beasts.... According to the investigation, his cultivation base is not in the Ancient Realm, but rather, at the peak of the Immortal Realm. However, his specific whereabouts are unknown, as he is difficult to track. They only know that his general location is Seajacket Island." With that, his smile grew cold.

Naturally, he hadn't forgotten about his agreement with the nine Sea Realm Demons.

Essentially, Meng Hao was in an invincible position in terms of the stakes of the bet. If he lost, it didn't really matter. Even if he wanted to give them his place in the Echelon, it was impossible. The only way to get his spot would be to kill him two times. If they wanted to do that, then it would have to be done outside of the sect. There, it could feasibly happen.

The Demonic Cultivator Horde seemed to regard themselves as having a great understanding of the Echelon. However, the truth of the matter was that they didn't know much at all. A place in the Echelon was not something that could be given away as the stakes of a bet. It was something that existed as part of a cycle of death.

Unfortunately for the Demonic Cultivator Horde, they didn't know about things like that. After all... after countless years, Meng Hao was only the second person in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to join the Echelon!

He would naturally agree to a bet that he essentially couldn't lose. The only reason he had said he would give his final answer in a month was to make the situation seem more realistic.

The appointed time passed, and he never responded, then all of a sudden, this jade slip arrived.... It seemed obvious that it was a tactic being employed by the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

The other jade slip was from Ling Yunzi, who informed Meng Hao that the assignment had been pushed by the Demonic Cultivator Horde. Opening the Windswept Realm required their cooperation, and as such, it had been impossible to refuse.

As a disciple of the sect, Meng Hao had to carry out assignments for the sect. That was the honorable thing to do, and furthermore, there was no reasonable grounds upon which to refuse.

Even though it was obvious the Demonic Cultivator Horde had arranged the assignment, Ling Yunzi was able to ensure that no Dao Realm experts would be involved, nor peak Ancient Realm cultivators. His request of Meng Hao was that he not really leave the sect. Instead, he should take a single step outside and immediately turn back, then report that he had failed in the assignment.

If a punishment was involved because of that, Granny Nine and the others would handle it.

If Meng Hao wasn't comfortable accepting the assignment, he could refuse, and they would try to find another way to resolve the issue. However, if that happened, it would cause an indeterminate delay in

opening the Windswept Realm.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. After a moment of thought he decided that he wouldn't actually complete the mission. He would step out of the sect, but then come back almost immediately and try to come up with some excuse to explain the matter.

What he really wanted to do was challenge the ninth golden gate stone stele again and see whether his current cultivation base could handle... that body cultivator's third fist strike!

"Although, the Demonic Cultivator Horde has most likely thought up some way to force me to accept the mission. I wonder what they'll do... Well, in any case, if I don't feel like going, they can't control me."

With that, he left the Immortal's cave, flying up through the water to appear in midair. He didn't stop for a moment, but instead, shot directly towards the main gate of the Nine Seas God World.

As he sped through the air at top speed, numerous cultivators saw him. Strange expressions could be seen on their faces, especially the Demonic cultivators, who clearly despised him and wanted to see him dead.

News about Meng Hao's bet with the nine Sea Realm Demons had long since spread throughout the sect. Furthermore, the fact that he had said that he would provide an answer within a month, and yet hadn't sent word, caused the nine Sea Realm Demons to be furious. As a result, they had spread all sorts of nasty rumors, which many of the disciples had caught wind of.

An hour later, Meng Hao reached the main gate of the Nine Seas God World, beyond which was a pitch black world of seawater. As soon as he passed through the gate, he would be in the waters of the Ninth Sea.

He didn't pause for a moment. He shot out of the gate and into the water, which instantly caused his entire person to be covered with icy coldness.

The instant he stepped out of the main gate, he prepared to go back into the sect. However, it was in that moment that he stopped in his tracks and

looked up ahead of him.

There in the dark sea water was a familiar figure. It was... Chen Fan!

Meng Hao's Elder Brother, Chen Fan!

A moment later, his appearance changed, and now, it was Fatty. After another moment passed, it was Chu Yuyan!

A quick succession of three people he knew all appeared in front of him. Then, the figure changed again, and now he was facing the leader of the nine Sea Realm Demons, Long Tianhai!

He stood there, smiling at Meng Hao. Then he opened his mouth and spoke. Although no words could be heard, Meng Hao could read his lips quite clearly.

"I can track down all three of them."

They were only eight words, but they formed a mighty threat!

Chapter 1061: I Can't Hurt You?!

Long Tianhai smiled lightly at Meng Hao. He had prepared long and hard to force Meng Hao to finally step out of the sect. He had investigated Meng Hao's personality, and was very curious to see what he would decide to do now.

Meng Hao's face darkened. He knew that the Demonic Cultivator Horde was definitely powerful enough to track down Fatty, Chu Yuyan and Chen Fan. After all, they weren't very important people as far as the Demonic Cultivator Horde was concerned, and all it would take to find them would be a bit of time.

However, using them to threaten Meng Hao was a bit childish. Obviously, the easiest way to resolve the situation was to get Granny Nine and the others involved. It wasn't that Meng Hao felt that his friends were unimportant.

He knew that even if he went all out and attacked Long Tianhai, it wouldn't do any good.

The best course of action would be to immediately notify Granny Nine. That would show his view, and would settle the matter just like that. Having reached this decision, he turned to head back into the sect.

"Could it be that the results of my investigation are in error?" said Long Tianhai. "You're so cold-hearted! You don't even care that your old flame from your youth, and your best friends, are being threatened? Well... I guess I should show you something else."

Long Tianhai shook his head and sighed. Then he waved his hand, causing an image to appear. As soon as Meng Hao saw the image, he stopped in place, and his eyes burned with killing intent.

The image depicted a single person. Chu Yuyan. Her face was pale, her hair was in disarray, and her lips were purple. Apparently, she had been poisoned.

She lay prone inside of a huge black shell. The mouth of the shell was as

sharp as a sword, and was slowly lowering. It seemed like it wouldn't be long before it sliced Chu Yuyan's head completely off!

Although the image was illusory, Meng Hao was familiar enough with Chu Yuyan to be able to tell that this was no magical illusion. Nor was it some other person transformed to look like her. This was the real Chu Yuyan!

"Are you looking to die?" Meng Hao asked, killing intent exploding within his eyes. He extended his right hand and pointed toward the image. No ripples of a magical technique could be seen, almost as if nothing had happened, causing Long Tianhai to narrow his eyes in confusion and suspicion.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he seemed to study the image for a moment longer, and then without any further hesitation, waved his hand, causing a jade slip to fly back toward the sect. Then, he transformed into a prismatic beam of light that shot toward Long Tianhai!

Even if the person in that black shell was not Chu Yuyan, but Fatty, or even Chen Fan, Meng Hao would do the same thing.

Earlier, he had chosen to return to the sect because that had seemed to be the best way to resolve the situation. Granny Nine could take care of everything. After all, he had assumed that his three friends were safe in their sects. The Demonic Cultivator Horde might be malicious, but they wouldn't have enough time to actually harm his friends, simple as that might be for them to do.

But now... it was too late. He was the one without enough time. Therefore, he simultaneously sent a jade slip to Granny Nine, and also let his rage burn to towering heights. Considering he had no other options left... he would pick the one option he had in front of him!

He attacked, killing intent boiling. Long Tianhai smiled slightly as his body suddenly flickered and began to fade away.

"It seems I overestimated you," he said. "Apparently you didn't notice that this is just an illusory projection! Even if I didn't disappear, you still couldn't hurt me. I guess there's no harm in telling you that the Demonic

Cultivator Horde didn't originally plan to do anything to your old flame or your other friends. That was my idea, and we nine Sea Realm Demons were the ones who actually kidnapped her." Long Tianhai chuckled and shook his head, seemingly deeply moved by his own methods.

"Go finish your assignment," he continued. "Chu Yuyan is on Seajacket Island. Don't worry, it's not a trick, I can promise you that she's really there. However, if you're not fast enough, if you're even the least bit too slow, she'll die. You only have two hours..." As he faded away, Long Tianhai laughed at the sheer pleasure of seeing Meng Hao like this, and at the joy of being completely confident in his plan.

However, before he faded away completely, Meng Hao snorted coldly.

"You think I can't hurt you?" he said, extending his hand and pointing toward Long Tianhai.

The wave of his finger unleashed his Demon Sealer's aura. Hexing magic spread out, transforming into the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex!

Karmic Hexing!

As soon as the Hex was unleashed, a boundlessly terrifying Karmic power exploded out. Now that Meng Hao had absorbed the blood of Paragon Nine Seals, his Demon Sealing magical techniques were exponentially more powerful. Now, he was the true and authentic Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, the true successor of the League, approved by Patriarch Nine Seals himself!

Therefore, when he unleashed Demon Sealing Hexing magic, it was shockingly powerful!

It didn't matter that he was facing an illusory version of Long Tianhai. There was still Karma. Of course, the greatest Karma was... connected to Long Tianhai's true form.

The illusory version of Long Tianhai suddenly trembled, and his face filled with shock as he suddenly sensed a feeling of intense crisis. Not only could he sense the crisis on his illusory form; currently, his true form, hidden away in his Immortal's cave in the Nine Seas God World, could

also sense the feeling of mortal danger.

“What’s going on!?!?” Long Tianhai was in his Immortal’s cave, and hadn’t personally gone to Seajacket Island. He was a sinister and cautious person, and his plan all along had been to personally stay inside the sect. After the plan was carried out smoothly, he would emerge to finish things off.

Now, however, his face fell and his heart seized. He immediately and without any hesitation moved to sever his connection with his illusory clone.

But... he was too late!

The power of the Hexing magic caused a Karma Thread to appear on the illusory Long Tianhai’s head, a thread that connected his illusory self to his true self. It stretched out back toward the main gate of the Nine Seas God World, where it eventually led to his Immortal’s cave.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with killing intent. Considering the level of his cultivation base, how could he not have noticed that Long Tianhai was only there in illusory form? However, that didn’t matter one bit. Even though he had no way of killing him then and there, he would definitely teach him a profound and unforgettable lesson.

“I’ll show you what it means to get hurt!” he said. His fingers twisted into an incantation gesture, and the Karma Thread distorted. The illusory image of Long Tianhai responded, growing more blurry. However, the Karma Thread grew more clear!

In the blink of an eye, it had transformed into a tunnel, a tunnel leading directly toward his true form!

Shockingly, Meng Hao’s Karmic Hexing had been developed to the pinnacle. In its current state... he could use Karma Threads to connect the illusory with the corporeal! In the briefest of instants, he could cause the illusory and the corporeal to transpose!

Hurt the illusory, damage the true self!

Between the illusory and the corporeal... exists Karma!

Meng Hao moved with incredible speed to suddenly appear directly in front of Long Tianhai's illusory form. Popping sounds rang out as his hand smacked onto Long Tianhai's illusory chest. He pushed down, and the illusory body began to tremble. Meng Hao's hands moved so fast they were a blur as he hit Long Tianhai nine times in a row.

In the same moment that Meng Hao appeared in front of his illusory form, back in the Immortal's cave in the sect, Long Tianhai's face fell. He lifted his right hand to try to sever the connection, but even as he did....

Outside of the main gate of the Nine Seas God World, Meng Hao's hand smashed into him nine times!

"Nine Heavens Destruction!" His face was expressionless as he uttered the name of the technique!

Booms could be heard as the illusory body was shattered. A miserable shriek rang out, a shriek filled with disbelief and wild astonishment. Simultaneously, back in the Immortal's cave, Long Tianhai sat there cross-legged, blood spewing out of his mouth. His chest was ruptured, collapsed, nine times in a row, until his entire person exploded.

Bits of blood and flesh spattered about as the power of the attack tore him into pieces. The only thing left was his head, which flew up screaming. Long Tianhai wasn't dead. He was a Demonic cultivator, with special inborn powers and an Ancient Realm cultivation base. All of that gave him powerful regenerative abilities that caused a new body to form almost instantly. Of course, this new body was much weaker than his old body.

"Meng Hao, you're DEAD!!!" he screamed, enraged. From the moment he had been born until now, he had never experienced such pain. However, even in the moment of his rage, a cold voice whispered in his ear.

Outside of the main gate of the Nine Seas God World, Long Tianhai's illusory body shattered. At the same time, his new body was forming back in his Immortal's cave, and the Karma Thread which had connected the two began to fade away.

However, Meng Hao's murderous rage toward Long Tianhai could not be

wiped away by a mere Nine Heavens Destruction attack. He stepped forward and grabbed ahold of the disappearing Karma Thread, which essentially allowed him to lay his hands on Long Tianhai's soul.

"Demon Sealing, Fifth Hex!" he said coldly. A rift appeared in his right hand, which rapidly opened from a size of a few inches to nearly a meter long. Then, the rift and the Karma Thread both disappeared.

When the rift reappeared, it was directly in front of Long Tianhai in his Immortal's cave. It was like a terrifying, gaping maw that instantly caused Long Tianhai to let out a scream of disbelief. Even as he backed up, the mouth chomped down, transposing Inside and Out. Half of Long Tianhai's body was consumed by the rift, and crunching sounds could be heard as blood sprayed out in all directions.

He now had only half of a body left. Screaming miserably, his inborn abilities kicked in again, causing another bizarre regeneration to occur. However, to restore himself twice in a row in such a way caused his qi and blood to be significantly weaker, by more than half.

Although he had recovered, his face was pale, and he was trembling with astonishment. He had no idea how Meng Hao had been able to injure his true form by hurting his illusory body. In fact, if he had reacted even one bit slower just now... he would have been killed!

Long Tianhai was now terrified, for the first time ever. Meng Hao's bizarre technique gave rise to an unprecedented level of fear in his heart.

"How could he be so powerful? He's far more powerful than my investigation indicated! Dammit! It's only been a month since I saw him last! How could he have gotten so much stronger so quickly!? Could it be that he was hiding his true power all along!?!? No, that can't be. It must be that he's just really skilled with that technique!!" Long Tianhai was trembling; Meng Hao left him completely scared witless.

Outside of the sect, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. By means of Long Tianhai's Karma Thread, he could sense Long Tianhai's position, and knew that he was still in the sect. From that, he could tell how cautious Long Tianhai was. Earlier, he had also employed Karmic

Hexing in the same way on the image of Chu Yuyan to determine her exact location!

“Long Tianhai, when I return, it won’t matter who’s protecting you. I’m going to KILL YOU!” With that, his body flickered like lightning as he headed toward Chu Yuyan.

Chapter 1062: Boiling Sea!

Meng Hao shot toward Seajacket Island with lightning speed. Now that he was eternally within the Immortal Emperor Realm, he truly looked like a lightning bolt as he sped forward, dazzlingly fast.

It was a speed that even the early Ancient Realm couldn't achieve, and was more akin to someone with six or seven extinguished Soul Lamps. And that... was while he was still under the pressure of the Ninth Sea!

If he left the Ninth Sea, his speed would be even greater!

As he shot along beneath the surface of the water, he only continued to move faster and faster, causing raging waves to roll out on the sea's surface. Killing intent raged in his heart.

His eyes flickered with coldness. It had been a very long time since he had been this angry, since he had itched with the desire to kill. At the moment, it didn't matter who got in his way, they would fall victim to his rage and his desire to kill.

Kidnapping friends to use as hostages was taboo in the cultivation world. Few people would dare to do such a thing. Everyone had friends and relatives, so if people engaged in such practices, it would lead to... widespread chaos.

Therefore, it was a tactic rarely employed, a bottom line not to be crossed, a principle not often violated.

But now, Long Tianhai had done just that very thing, and it caused Meng Hao to be filled with the desire to slaughter the entire Demonic Cultivator Horde.

He was not some pious and devout individual. If people left him alone, he would do nothing to them, but now, he had been provoked. Any sense of guilt he felt regarding the situation with the Demonic Cultivator Horde was now completely gone.

"You people deserve to die, and die you shall!"

His eyes flickered with coldness as he sped forward. However, that

coldness could not cover up the concern he felt in his heart.

Although he had avoided developing romantic feelings toward Chu Yuyan, it would be impossible for him to deny that she occupied a place deep in his heart.

Although she only existed in Xu Qing's shadow, and was almost invisible, Meng Hao could never forget all of the things that had occurred between the two of them. His choice was Xu Qing, but that didn't mean he was willing to let Chu Yuyan get hurt.

After less time passed than it takes half an incense stick to burn, a rumbling sound echoed out across the surface of the sea as Meng Hao burst out into the open air. Now that the pressure of the Ninth Sea was gone, his energy rocketed up, and he glowed with the glory of the Immortal Emperor Realm.

He took a deep breath, and a sound like that of muffled thunder echoed out in all directions. The sea around him, and even the air, seemed to cave in.

It only took one breath for him to absorb all of the energy of Heaven and Earth in the area. He used this to ignite his cultivation base and, eyes glowing coldly, he shot off... moving even faster than he had when below the surface of the water!

BOOM!

A piercing scream could be heard as he shot through the air with even increasing speed!

Sonic booms spread out behind him, leaving circular clouds that shook Heaven and Earth.

As soon as he appeared, his aura spread out, and the sea beasts of the Ninth Sea detected it. It only took a moment for numerous beasts to charge toward him from all directions. The first creature to appear was a mass of tentacles that whipped toward him.

The surface of the sea was aboil as huge shapes rose up from underneath the water. It was as if an infinite number of sea beasts were

now glaring at Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, the tentacles were bearing down on him as dozens of sea beasts charged in attack.

“Scram!” he said, not even taking the time to pay attention to them or slow down a bit. His words were like thunder, shaking all creation. Because he was in the Immortal Emperor Realm, his single word became a tempest that swept out in all directions over the surface of the sea, smashing everything it touched.

From a distance, a huge depression appeared in the sea, like a crater.

The sea beasts let out bloodcurdling screams as they were slammed into the surface of the water and destroyed. Blood spurted out everywhere and countless tentacles were shredded to pieces. Instantly, the dozens of attacking sea beasts’ blood stained the water red.

Meng Hao continued on, not having reduced his speed in the slightest.

However, it was virtually impossible to even count how many sea beasts resided in the Ninth Sea. To them, Meng Hao’s aura was something that instantly caused insane rage and hatred to burst out within them. It only took a moment for the sea to seethe as even more sea beasts raced toward him.

Among them were three who were comparable to the peak of the Immortal Realm. They were enormous in size and had surging energy.

“Looking to die?!” Meng Hao said, his eyes flickering with killing intent. He waved a finger, instantly causing hundreds of thousands of mountains to drop down from above.

These mountains were the manifestation of his Mountain Consuming Incantation. With his Immortal Emperor cultivation base, the hundreds of thousands of huge mountains linked together into a mountain chain which was far more powerful than any of the sea beasts.

“Crush them to death!” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with murder as the hundreds of thousands of mountains smashed down toward the surface of the sea. Countless miserable shrieks could be heard as the sea beasts’

bones were crushed, and their blood sprayed out in all directions.

Meng Hao sped forward at top speed, crushing anything that got in his way. The slaughter was tremendous, and yet, it did nothing to ease the fury in his heart; instead, it caused his anxiety to grow.

The fact remained that there were simply too many sea beasts in the Ninth Sea. Kill ten, and a hundred would take their place. Kill hundreds, and thousands would replace them. Kill thousands, and tens of thousands would appear!

There didn't seem to be any end in sight. Massive rumblings echoed out, along with powerful roars. A huge shell shot up from the seafloor, surrounded by an army of seahorses. All of them slammed into Meng Hao's hundreds of thousands of mountains.

A boom rang out as the shell was cracked, and yet did not shatter. It fought back against the mountains, during which time, countless other sea beasts flew past them to attack Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was so furious he started laughing, and then coldly said, "It's been a long time since I've collected Demon hearts!"

Eyes flickering with killing intent, he performed an incantation gesture, causing the hundreds of thousands of mountains to vanish. What reappeared in their place was, shockingly, a gigantic, indescribably huge Blood Demon head.

It had crimson skin, bright red eyes, and a shocking, solitary horn. It was fully 30,000 meters tall, and was not illusory, but rather, corporeal. Now that Meng Hao was the Immortal Emperor, his divine abilities had undergone Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling transformations.

The instant the Blood Demon head appeared, its eyes glowed bright red, and it threw its head back and roared. Suddenly, the head split into two, and then four, and then eight, and then sixteen. In the blink of an eye... more than a thousand Blood Demon heads had appeared, each one vicious and fierce. Meng Hao swished his sleeve, and 1,000 Blood Demon heads shot toward the surrounding Sea Demons.

Miserable shrieks rang out from the mouths of the sea beasts. As soon as a Blood Demon head touched a sea beast, the sea beast would rapidly wither, and would be killed in body and spirit!

Within only a few breaths of time, a massive slaughter was carried out. Thousands of sea beasts were all killed!

Numerous Sea Demon hearts flew out, which Meng Hao collected with the flick of a sleeve. At the same time, he never stopped moving. He continued to speed forward, surrounded by the numerous Blood Demon heads.

Based on what he could sense, he was getting much closer to Chu Yuyan.

"She's just up ahead!" He shot forward amidst rumblings like that of thunder. All of a sudden, a huge arm shot up from the ocean up ahead. It was blue and covered with seaweed, and as soon as it appeared, it shot toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, the sea around him churned as countless enraged sea beasts shot out. This time, there were more than 10,000, causing huge waves to spread out across the water.

Meng Hao could see Seajacket Island off in the distance. However, the roiling sea between him and the island was filled with tens of thousands of additional sea beasts. In fact, there appeared to be almost 100,000.

100,000 sea beasts would be enough to cause any Immortal Realm cultivator to be filled with terror. Even someone in the mid Ancient Realm would begin to pant.

There were even some extraordinarily strong Sea Giants among them, whose heads broke the surface of the water to stare coldly at Meng Hao.

When Meng Hao saw the 100,000 sea beasts, he smiled coldly. It was a smile filled with a brutal desire to kill.

"If all 100,000 of these sea beasts die here today, then maybe a bit of my rage can be sated!" With that, he extended his right hand, within which

appeared, shockingly... a globe of flame!

The Essence of Divine Flame!

The Essence of Divine Flame was fused into one of Meng Hao's Immortal meridians, becoming a trump card that he could use in battle. Intense, blistering heat radiated out as soon as it appeared, and the Sea Giant which had been reaching out toward him suddenly began to tremble. The other sea beasts in the area were also shaking, and an intense sensation of mortal crisis rose up in their minds.

They weren't very intelligent, but that didn't make them any less afraid of dying. Just as they began to back up, Meng Hao viciously tossed the Essence of Divine Flame down toward the Ninth Sea.

The Essence of Divine Flame turned into a streak of dazzling flame that slammed into the water. Sea beasts began to scream and back up, but unfortunately for them, it was too late!

The Essence of Divine Flame sank into the water, and instantly, roiling heat exploded out. The surface of the water began to steam as intense heat caused the sea water to begin to boil!!

In the blink of an eye, the temperature of the water reached an unbelievable level. This was not ordinary water, and it was not an ordinary temperature. It was so intensely hot that it could snuff out the life forces of mighty beings. This entire part of the sea was now so hot that it was beginning to evaporate.

The nearest sea beasts screamed miserably as they were boiled alive, causing their bodies to fall apart into pieces. It didn't matter how tough their armored hides were, they became bright red!!

The gigantic shell could do nothing to fight back, and a miserable shriek could be heard as it was annihilated!

The intensity of the heat set the entire sea in the area into a boil. Bloodcurdling screams rang out in all directions. The Sea Giant screamed and the sea beasts struggled. All was in vain. It only took a brief moment... for the entire area to turn into a gigantic kettle!

The Ninth Sea was the water, and the Essence of Divine Flame provided the heat. The sea was being used to stew up some seafood!

Chapter 1063: Paragon Rocks the Might of the Sea!

How tragic!

As the sea around Seajacket Island boiled, and the broken corpses of numerous sea beasts floated up, Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing the sea to part. The Essence of Divine Flame flew up into his palm and disappeared.

Meng Hao didn't even glance at the surface of the sea. With a flash, he shot forward toward Seajacket Island, which rapidly grew larger and larger in his field of view.

As he neared the island, eight mighty auras suddenly arose. Shockingly... all of them were of the Ancient Realm!

Each one had three or four extinguished Soul Lamps, and were obviously eight of the nine Sea Realm Demons. They were also Chosen of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, people who had long since left the Immortal Realm and stepped into the Ancient Realm!

Currently, they were bursting with incredible energy, almost as if they were sending a message to Meng Hao... that they were waiting for him!

Even though they had surely been watching the scene which had just played out... they were as arrogant and tyrannical as ever!

As for Meng Hao, he could tell without a doubt that Chu Yuyan was there on the island!

Furthermore, in addition to her aura, and the auras of the eight Demonic cultivators, there was an additional aura on the island!

That aura was deeply hidden in the heart of the island, almost as if it were in command of the whole area. Currently, it was coldly observing as Meng Hao neared, apparently believing that Meng Hao could not detect it.

It only took a single glance for Meng Hao to be able to tell that this person's cultivation base... was in the Ancient Realm, with six

extinguished Soul Lamps!

That counted, not as the early Ancient Realm, but the mid Ancient Realm!

As far as the Demonic Cultivator Horde was concerned, Meng Hao might be powerful, but he was still a mere Immortal Realm cultivator. The only thing they felt they needed to fear was when he absorbed a Nirvana Fruit, like he had on Planet East Victory. At that time, he had temporarily risen into the Immortal Emperor Realm, giving him sufficient battle prowess to slay two Ancient Realm cultivators.

However, they viewed that as a mere temporary boost in battle prowess. He wasn't capable of maintaining such power for very long, which meant that they could definitely beat him!

Furthermore, as an extra precaution, they had taken even further steps to prepare.

They had set up a trap that was as dangerous as a dragon's pool or a tiger's den!

Meng Hao could see how well they were prepared, and could also sense the presence of a powerful spell formation on the island. Although he frowned, he didn't slow down at all, but instead, sped up!

There are some things in life that just have to be done!

There are some people that must be saved!

Even if the road ahead passed through mountains of daggers and seas of flames... that didn't matter!

When it came to the practice of cultivation, some people considered everything closely. They evaluated everything based on personal benefit, and for the sake of their own well-being, would bury their own hearts! Meng Hao had no use for such ways!

He wanted freedom and independence!

His freedom was a freedom to do anything he wished. His independence was being independent in his way of thinking! Perhaps, far in the future he

would stand at the pinnacle of everything and look out over the Heavens and the Earth. At that time, he would be able to examine his conscience and be completely free of any guilt. He would have no regrets! His life would be completely free and unfettered by anything!

“I’m going to save her. And as for you, Demonic Cultivator Horde, as long as I live, any of you who I can kill... WILL DIE!” Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. Rumbling echoed out as he shot closer to the island.

The instant he entered the island’s airspace, a thunderous roar could be heard as the brilliant light of a spell formation shot up along the island’s borders. Massive pressure instantly weighed down on Meng Hao from all directions!

That pressure was pressure from the Ninth Sea! The island’s spell formation had only one function, and that was to focus such pressure. As a result, the pressure weighing down on Meng Hao was instantly greater than what he felt inside the Nine Seas God World, and was increasing rapidly.

The spell formation might seem simplistic, but it was very effective, and was perfectly targeted against Meng Hao!

Meng Hao was a newcomer. Although he had been in the Nine Seas God World for two months or so, he couldn’t possibly compare to these Demonic cultivators, who had been born in the Ninth Sea. They were extremely accustomed to the pressure, and he was not, making it his most obvious weakness!

To the Demonic Cultivator Horde, the pressure posed no obstacle to them at all, not unless they went down far enough to where the pressure reached incredible levels. However, the effect it had on Meng Hao was significant.

A boom could be heard as he suddenly felt as if countless mountains were crushing down onto him, destabilizing his flight momentarily. It was a downward force that seemed like it would shove him to the ground and prevent him from ever standing back up.

The pressure continued to mount. In the blink of an eye, it had reached a level multiple times greater than that in the Nine Seas God World. Meng Hao could even sense his cultivation base falling rapidly as a result.

And yet, he sped along as quickly as ever, gritting his teeth... as he got closer and closer to Chu Yuyan.

Suddenly, snide, mocking laughter rang out.

“So, Meng Hao, it turns out that you’re loyal and affectionate after all! Well, that’s good. If you had kept being stubborn, hiding away and refusing to agree to our wager, things would have gotten difficult for us.

“It seems such a shame to have to kill you.” Along with the laughter, eight Demonic cultivators flew toward Meng Hao in prismatic beams of light. Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place. The pressure weighing down on him was making him tremble, but his eyes were as icy cold as ever.

“Didn’t I say that we didn’t even need to use the spell formation!?” said one of them. “This brat’s cultivation base is so weak we could crush him without it!”

One by one, the eight Demonic cultivators became visible. All of them were chuckling coldly as they neared Meng Hao.

Meng suddenly laughed and said, “Apparently Long Tianhai didn’t tell you yet.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” replied one of the eight Demonic cultivators, a woman. Her cultivation base was the strongest of the group, her fifth Soul Lamp being mostly extinguished. From the look of it, she could complete extinguishing it at any moment. Her eyes flickered, as if she was suddenly experiencing an ill premonition.

Meng Hao chuckled darkly. The pressure weighing down on him was terrifying, but nonetheless, his energy suddenly shot up. A tempest kicked up around him, which spread out in all directions, causing the island to quake and the sea to froth.

The will of the Immortal Emperor was something that the Heavens could not eclipse and the Earth could not cover up. The pressure on the

island was intense, but it was not the pressure of the entire Ninth Sea. It was just pressure from one small area, barely 1/10,000th of the full pressure. It was a pressure... that was matched by the will of the Immortal Emperor!

The tempest spread out, rising high into the sky and slamming into the pressure of the Ninth Sea. A huge boom echoed out.

The resulting collision shocked the eight Demonic cultivators, whose hearts began to pound.

“He’s trying to fight back against the pressure of the Ninth Sea?!”

“He overestimates his abilities! How could he possibly fight the pressure of the Ninth Sea!?” The eight Demonic cultivators were astonished, and immediately gave voice to their shock. They were just about to advance on Meng Hao when all of a sudden....

Meng Hao’s voice crackled out like thunder, echoing in all directions.

“Fight back? I won’t be fighting back against it. I’ll be OVERPOWERING IT!”

His hair whipped around him as he looked up. He was like a giant, staring in the face of the pressure. The will of the Immortal Emperor surged as he raised both hands into the air and then waved them to either side.

The tempest screamed, apparently on the verge of... overpowering the pressure of the Ninth Sea!

Heaven and Earth shook as the pressure converged by the spell formation seemed to roar in rage. Apparently, it felt deeply insulted that a cultivator dared to fight back against it. The surrounding sea raged as huge waves swept across it.

“You... are not the full pressure of the Ninth Sea! You’re just a tiny portion!” The more he trembled under the pressure weighing down on him, the more he wanted to vanquish it.

The pressure increased, and his eyes gleamed with a vicious light. He

waved his hand and cried out, "Paragon Bridge!" Instantly, shocking rumbling sounds could be heard as the illusory Paragon Bridge formed. It was only one section of the boundless bridge, and yet, its aura still caused everything to dim, and the surroundings to shake violently. The pressure gathered by the spell formation suddenly wavered.

Apparently Meng Hao's actions enraged the will of the pressure. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the pressure redoubled, intent on absolutely pulverizing Meng Hao!

The eight Demonic Cultivators' faces fell as they watched the island around them begin to crumble. The pressure of the Ninth Sea, which had been completely invisible before, was now causing distortions and ripples to appear.

"He's just looking to die! Now is the perfect time to strike!"

"What a moron! He's actually fighting back against the pressure of the Ninth Sea! Plus he even raves about overpowering it!?" The eight Demonic Cultivators' killing intent surged, and they whistled through the air in colorful beams of light as they closed in on Meng Hao.

As they neared, Meng Hao looked up. Blue veins bulged on his face, and his eyes were shot with blood. The pressure weighing down on him was intense, but not enough to make him buckle. Instead, he fought back with intense power as he did just as he said, attempting to overpower the pressure of the Ninth Sea.

He completely ignored the eight Demonic Cultivators. Instead, he lifted his right foot and then slowly stepped forward onto the illusory Paragon Bridge.

As soon as his foot touched down, intense rumbling could be heard, and an extraordinary aura erupted. Muffled sounds like thunder rolled out, and huge fissures snaked out over the surface of the island as the pressure from above distorted everything.

Cracking sounds could be heard coming from Meng Hao's body because of the the pressure. The eight Demonic Cultivators coughed up mouthfuls of blood, as if some massive force had just stomped onto their bodies.

Now they were contending with, not just the pressure of the Ninth Sea, but also the power of Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge.... They were being affected by the power Meng Hao was using to fight back against the pressure!

Meng Hao grinned viciously as he took a second step!

Everything shook as a huge boom rattled out. Meng Hao then took a third step. Then a fourth!

The eight Demonic cultivators' faces fell as they felt massive, unbearable power trampling them. They fell back, blood spraying from their mouths. They felt like their heads were being crushed. Each step Meng Hao took caused blood to spurt out of their mouths, and sent their cultivation bases into instability. The aggressive pressure of both Meng Hao and the Ninth Sea pushed them back so forcefully that they didn't dare to get any closer.

"He.... he's actually overpowering the pressure of the Ninth Sea!"

"How could this be possible!? He's so strong!!" Their faces fell and their hearts pounded. It was virtually impossible for them to conceive that someone could vanquish the pressure of the Ninth Sea. Although it was only a small portion, it was still derived from the Ninth Sea!

Then... Meng Hao took a fifth step!

Chapter 1064: Annihilating the Eight Demons!

The eight Demonic cultivators raged inwardly, and their hearts trembled.

“Could it be that he was hiding his true power before? Dammit!!”

“This Meng Hao is too treacherous! He has a cultivation base like this but didn’t reveal it back at the golden gate stone stele! He did it all to draw us out!”

“Despicable! Shameless!!”

Even though Meng Hao hadn’t even made an attack yet, they could see that he was strong enough to overwhelm the pressure of the Ninth Sea. What caused their scalps to tingle most was the sense that without the spell formation focusing the pressure of the Ninth Sea, Meng Hao... it would be even easier for Meng Hao to fight them!

“Just what level is his cultivation base at? There’s no way someone in the Immortal Realm could be this strong!!”

The eight Demonic cultivators trembled as he took his fifth step. Not a single cloud could be seen in the sky, and yet peals of thunder shook everything as the Paragon Bridge clashed with the pressure of the Ninth Sea!

The brunt of the force was taken by Meng Hao. However, he was eternally within the Immortal Emperor Realm, and his strength, both in terms of his fleshly body and his cultivation base, enabled him to endure it. Besides, he also had his Eternal stratum working to restore him constantly.

However... the eight Demonic cultivators couldn’t endure. They might be Chosen from the Demonic Cultivator Horde, powerful Ancient Realm cultivators, but they simply couldn’t compare to Meng Hao at all!

Therefore, Meng Hao could take his fifth step, whereas the eight Demonic cultivators... coughed up more blood and were further injured.

Meng Hao's steps had been taken too quickly, and each one was like a massive stomp that severely injured the eight Demonic Cultivators five times in a row!

Three of them simply couldn't withstand it. They screamed as their bodies withered and began to collapse.

You could say that before, Meng Hao had only been able to use a small bit of the Paragon Bridge's power. Now, he was able to unleash far more of that power. Because he had entered the Immortal Emperor Realm, every step he took caused the Paragon Bridge to reveal more and more of its true, supreme power!!

The eight Demonic cultivators were reeling in shock as Meng Hao threw his head back and roared, then took a sixth step. Then a seventh!

Two quick steps in succession caused thunder to rumble. Blood oozed out of the corners of Meng Hao's mouth, the price he had to pay to unleash this power. At the same time, the island was beginning to shatter, its edges crumbling and collapsing into the sea, which was also churning, almost as if it were roaring in rage!

The pressure of the Ninth Sea twisted and distorted. It was almost as if... the incredible pressure exerted by Meng Hao was going to shatter the Ninth Sea's pressure!

To the eight Demonic cultivators, this was a huge catastrophe!

The three of their group who had already reached their limit let out bloodcurdling screams!

"NO!!" The rumbling pressure exuded by the collision of the Ninth Sea and the Paragon Bridge caused their bodies to literally explode. They... were killed in body and soul!

Of the eight Demonic cultivators, three were dead. Of the five that remained after that, three more coughed up blood and began to shake violently. Apparently they couldn't hold on any longer; looks of astonishment and terror flickered across their faces. All of a sudden they were filled with regret. They regretted provoking Meng Hao, and could

never have possibly imagined that... he was this powerful!

They were so shocked and terrified that they began to back up and get ready to run for their lives.

“He’s definitely not in the Immortal Realm! There’s no way someone in the Immortal Realm could be so powerful. He’s in the Ancient Realm! Definitely the Ancient Realm! He must have extinguished at least five Soul Lamps, maybe more!!” The remaining Demonic cultivators were all flabbergasted.

“Horde Uncle, save us!!” they called out, their voices echoing out around the island.

Currently, a middle-aged man sat cross-legged in the center of the island. He looked very much like a cultivator, except that he had a single horn growing out of his head.

The horn was pure white, as was the color of his skin!

He glared over at the battle taking place, and at Meng Hao walking on the Paragon Bridge, crushing the pressure of the Ninth Sea. He watched as only a few steps either injured or killed the eight other Demonic cultivators.

What he was seeing caused him to pant, and even gasp.

“Dammit! We misjudged his cultivation base! He can actually overwhelm the pressure of the Ninth Sea!! At this point, me stepping in won’t do any good!

“I have to wait until his power fades. If his final step shatters the pressure of the Ninth Sea, then I’ll have to flee. There’s no way I could fight him at that point. However, if the pressure is still there after he takes his final step, then... he will have reached his limit. His power will be used up, and it will be the perfect time to attack!”

The middle-aged Demonic cultivator ignored the cries for help and stared anxiously at Meng Hao.

Seeing that no Senior member of their Horde was making an

appearance, the remaining Demonic cultivators felt despair rising up within them.

Even the strongest of their number, the female Demonic cultivator, and the next strongest member, the seventh Sea Realm Demon, were barely able to hold on. They watched Meng Hao's energy rising up madly as he walked across the Paragon Bridge; the pressure of the Ninth Sea was losing its grip on him, and the island was collapsing around them. The female Demonic cultivator gritted her teeth and screamed. Her four extinguished Soul Lamps suddenly swirled into motion, and she charged forward toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao heard the cries of the Demonic cultivators. Licking the blood off of his lips, he coldly said, "You people... just don't understand what it means to be Immortal!"

Continuing to ignore his opponents, including the female Demonic cultivator, he took another step....

Eight steps!

The Paragon Bridge shook; gradually, it was becoming more corporeal, and was also emanating an air of extreme ancientness. The surrounding waters of the Ninth Sea seethed, and more portions of the island collapsed.

The three Demonic cultivators who had reached their limit earlier let out miserable shrieks as Meng Hao took his eighth step. Then the pressure ripped them to shreds, and they were killed in body and spirit.

Nothing remained behind!

At the same time, the female Demonic cultivator coughed up a mouthful of blood, and her body began to wither up. She was incapable of advancing any further. The seventh Sea Realm Demon laughed bitterly, and his eyes gleamed with ferocity. Then, he slammed his palm down onto his own chest, detonating his entire body. Flesh and blood sprayed out, but then transformed into life force power that shot into the female Demonic cultivator.

“RUN!” That was the final thing he said before he died.

Of the eight Demonic cultivators from moments ago, seven were already dead. Only the woman was left, trembling with fear as she received her companion’s life force. As it poured into her, her fifth Soul Lamp suddenly winked out, and her cultivation base began to rise.

And yet, an increase in cultivation base at this moment... was too little, too late!

She gritted her teeth, using the additional life force and cultivation base power to back up and flee.

However, Meng Hao’s killing intent had been building up from the moment he left the Nine Seas God World. He would not allow any living enemy to escape.

In the same moment that the female Demonic cultivator turned to flee, he took his ninth step, his last step. As his foot stepped down, he shuddered and coughed up a mouthful of blood. At the same time, his body withered rapidly.

However, the explosive power unleashed by that final step caused massive quaking on the island, more than thirty percent of which had now collapsed into the sea. One chunk after another splashed into the water and sank down. The water in the area was shoved away, as if by some massive attack, causing a huge depression to appear on the surface of the sea.

The powerful female Demonic cultivator couldn’t prevent herself from letting out a miserable shriek from her position 300 meters away. Then she exploded in a haze of bone fragments and blood.

Meng Hao staggered a bit, as if he were about to fall over. The Paragon Bridge turned illusory again, and the pressure of the Ninth Sea was still there, shoving down on him explosively. It wanted to bury Meng Hao, whose body emitted cracking sounds. He was clearly in a very sorry state, so tattered that his appearance was appalling.

Just when he was about to fall over, just when the pressure of the Ninth

Sea was about to inundate him, a long peal of laughter rang out from the center of the island. A figure shot out as fast as lightning to appear directly in front of Meng Hao. An explosive Ancient Realm aura of six extinguished Soul Lamps filled the area.

“DIE!” It was none other than the middle-aged Demonic cultivator, who had been waiting this whole time for this one chance. He could almost visualize himself striking Meng Hao, turning him into a cloud of blood. However, destroying his body would not kill his soul, which he would need to use special magic to extract and condense the mark of the Echelon from. However, it was still no different than a fatal blow.

The thought of being able to personally fell someone in the Echelon caused the middle-aged man to feel extremely excited.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly looked up, and his eyes flickered coldly. In the blink of an eye, he was no longer withered, and in fact, a derisive smile twisted his lips.

He had been waiting for this man to show up. Although he could sense his aura before, he couldn't see him, making it impossible to use the Lightning Cauldron to force him out. The man had remained hidden the entire time, and so Meng Hao had allowed himself to grow weaker and weaker, certain that the man would eventually show his face. The Demonic Cultivator Horde wanted his place in the Echelon. If he was killed in body and spirit by the pressure of the Ninth Sea, that would not fit with the designs of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, despite their lack of understanding regarding the details of the Echelon. They surely would not permit that to happen.

Therefore, the man had waited until he appeared to be completely weak and on the verge of being overwhelmed by the pressure of the Ninth Sea.... Then he made his move!

When he saw the cold light in Meng Hao's eyes, and the derisive smile on his face, the middle-aged Demonic cultivator's scalp went numb, and his heart began to pound.

“You'll be the one dying today!” said Meng Hao, lifting his right hand up

and shoving it forward. As soon as it made contact with the Demonic cultivator's double-palmed attack, flesh and blood cultivation base power suddenly flowed into Meng Hao, causing his face to flush slightly.

Blood Demon Grand Magic!

The Demonic cultivator gasped hoarsely, and his face filled with astonishment as he backed up. Moments ago, he had felt ten percent of his life force and cultivation base being sucked away.

A moment later he stabilized himself, and killing intent flickered in his eyes. Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge was beginning to fade away, causing the man to laugh coldly.

"Who cares if you have some trick moves," he said. "You're no match for me under the pressure of the Ninth Sea!"

"Pressure of the Ninth Sea?" asked Meng Hao, looking up into the sky. "The Heavens can't eclipse me and the Earth can't cover me up! The pressure of the Ninth Sea might as well stop dreaming about trying to suppress me!"

As he spoke, his energy spiked. Beneath him, the Paragon Bridge grew clear once again. He took a deep breath and then... stepped forward for the tenth time!

That tenth step caused the pressure of the Ninth Sea to shatter. The spell formation was completely destroyed, and the island quaked as... it shattered into pieces that began to crumble apart in all directions!

At the same time, Meng Hao's energy was now no longer restricted by anything, and rocketed up. Wild colors flashed and the wind screamed around him, violent enough to slash the Heavens!

He was like... a dragon breaking free of its cage!

Chapter 1065: Towering Killing Intent!

Gone was the pressure of the Ninth Sea!

Gone was the island's spell formation!

Gone was the interference caused by the eight Demonic cultivators!

The pressure vanished, and the spell formation fell to pieces. The island was collapsing, and the Demonic cultivators were slaughtered....

The will of the Immortal Emperor exploded out fully and thoroughly!

Colors flashed and the wind howled. Meng Hao hovered in midair, clothes and hair whipping in the wind, radiating pulses of Immortal spirit. It was as if he was completely different than any other living thing in this Realm, as if he... were the Emperor of the entire Immortal Realm!

The lands he walked belonged to him by Imperial right!

If he wished, a single glance could shatter Heaven and Earth!

Every breath he took caused thunder to boom and the sea to seethe as if in fear. The air around him transformed into a huge vortex, spinning around and creating a huge depression in the sea!

The sight was overwhelmingly spectacular. The air twisted and distorted as if it were about to be destroyed, and Meng Hao's eyes shone as if with stars, radiant and glittering.

An intense Imperial will radiated out from him, combining with the Immortal spirit to shocking effect. The middle-aged Demonic cultivator's face was pale white as he was shoved backward beyond his own control. Trembling, he could feel his heart pounding in his chest.

Heavenly bodies dimmed as Meng Hao stood there, radiating boundless, glorious light, exploding with the most powerful energy he had ever possessed since he had begun to practice cultivation. This was his current most powerful state, the peak of his battle prowess!

Beneath him, rumbling booms filled the air as what was left of the island was wracked with shocking power, as if it were experiencing an

apocalypse.

Cracks spread out in all directions, filling the remnants of the island and shattering them into smaller pieces. What had once been mountains sunk into the sea. Massive rumbling sounds could be heard, almost like the pained roars of some mortally wounded primordial beast.

As the island crumbled to bits, the chain of mountains which occupied the very center of the island teetered precariously until finally, the last remaining mountains were flattened, and the entire area became nothing more than seawater!

At the same time, the collapsing mountains revealed an Immortal's cave which had remained underneath them the entire time. It was now exposed and open for anyone to see.

This Immortal's cave was made up of a violet lagoon, within which was a huge black shell. Laying unconscious in that shell... was Chu Yuyan.

Before, the way the shell had been hanging over her seemed like a death sentence. But then, it ended up saving her life!

It wasn't that the shell intended to do that; things had just happened too quickly. Before the shell could even do anything, the mountains had begun to collapse!

Of course, that is exactly how Meng Hao planned it. Because of the image shown to him by Long Tianhai, he had known all along that Chu Yuyan was inside the shell.

The shattering mountains and collapsing lands didn't matter; she was mostly shielded by the powerful shell itself. They were all improvised tools he had meticulously manipulated to save Chu Yuyan. Now, as soon as he caught sight of her, he flashed in her direction as fast as a shooting star!

Before blinking your eyes, you would have seen him off in the distance. After blinking your eyes, you would have found that he was in the collapsed Immortal's cave. The black shell trembled and was about to snap shut and decapitate her.

It was in that moment that Meng Hao suddenly shouted, "Hex!"

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed, causing the black shell to shudder to a stop. It was now incapable of closing! Meng Hao appeared in front of it, reached out, and grabbed the bottom half of the shell with one hand, the top half with the other.

His eyes flickered with killing intent as he then drew upon the full power of his fleshly body to wrench his hands in opposite directions.

A cracking sound rang out, along with a miserable shriek, as the black shell was ripped apart!

It was completely torn in two!

As the final remnants of the mountains and lands sank into the ocean, Meng Hao held Chu Yuyan in his arms and poured cultivation base power into her. Instantly, he could sense the deadly poison inside of her.

The poison was pernicious, but Chu Yuyan's body was still fighting back against it, despite having clearly been poisoned for quite some time. Apparently, she had some innate resistance to it.

However, it was a tricky poison. After pouring some cultivation base power into her, Meng Hao realized that the poison was somewhat self-aware. It actually avoided him, and in the blink of an eye, it seemed to realize that it was no match for him in a direct fight. Therefore, to resist Meng Hao's Immortal power, it was threatening to make Chu Yuyan's body the battleground. Trying to force it out would surely harm her.

If things got out of hand, Chu Yuyan would end up even more hurt than she already was, and her situation would be impossible to reverse!

Even if Meng Hao didn't do anything drastic, however, her life force would still drain away. It wouldn't be very long before she was completely withered up, the flame of her life force completely extinguished.

Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly, and rage began to burn in his heart.

Chu Yuyan had not yet reached Immortal Ascension, and was still in the Dao Seeking stage. However, in their attempts to snag a place in the Echelon, the Demonic Cultivator Horde had sent Ancient Realm cultivators to capture and poison her, a mere Dao Seeking cultivator!

That was not just accomplishing things by fair means or foul. That was acting with complete wickedness and villainy!

The killing intent in Meng Hao's eyes flickered intensely. Suddenly, in the same moment that his Immortal power touched the deadly poison, blood oozed out of the corners of Chu Yuyan's mouth, and her eyes flickered open.

The only thing she could make out was Meng Hao, standing there in front of her. As soon as she realized it was him, she blinked in surprise.

"Am I dreaming again...?" she murmured. Then she lapsed again into unconsciousness.

Those simple words caused Meng Hao to tremble. As he looked down at her unconscious form, his eyes flickered with complex emotions.

Cultivators didn't dream. Or at least, they rarely did!

The higher a cultivator's cultivation base, the less likely they were to experience dreams. Although Dao Seeking cultivators didn't count for much to Meng Hao, to many people... they were the pinnacle. The next step beyond that was the Immortal Realm!

At such a level of cultivation, dreams simply shouldn't occur. If they did, it likely indicated that the cultivator was afflicted by an inner Devil!

If she didn't have an inner Devil, and yet still dreamed... then how intense must her thoughts and emotions have been ...to cause such a thing to happen? And then there was that word 'again,' which seemed to indicate that it had happened more than once!

Chu Yuyan's muttered words caused Meng Hao to understand exactly what was going on in her heart now that she had left Planet South Heaven.

He sighed and looked up. When he did, his eyes flickered with even more intense, murderous intentions. The angrier he got, the more he wanted to kill. He suddenly shot up into the air, turning around coldly to face the shocked middle-aged Demonic cultivator.

"Impossible!!" the man gasped. His face flickered and his scalp tingled to

the point where it felt like it would explode. He still couldn't believe that Meng Hao had actually overwhelmed the pressure of the Ninth Sea!

He almost didn't even notice that the island had collapsed and that Meng Hao had saved Chu Yuyan. He suddenly realized that he was standing directly in front of someone who had shattered the pressure of the Ninth Sea. Even though his own cultivation base was clearly much higher compared to Meng Hao's, all of a sudden he realized... that he was the one who was afraid!

In fact, when Meng Hao's gaze locked onto him, he subconsciously backed up and then prepared to flee.

But could Meng Hao really let him go? The intensity of his killing intent was impossible to even describe. As the middle-aged Demonic cultivator turned to flee, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared. That roar was packed with the will of the Immortal Emperor, causing everything to shake violently. The air shattered as a massive wind sprang up in all directions.

As the wind screamed into motion, it caused pressure to build up, as if... it were replacing the power exerted by the Ninth Sea!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

The Demonic cultivator trembled as the wind swept across him. Blood spurted out of his mouth, and his face went deathly pale. He currently had no will to fight whatsoever, and in fact, felt a sensation of intense, deadly crisis, caused by none other than Meng Hao.

"He's even stronger than before! Dammit! How could he be so terrifying!?"

In a panic, the Demonic cultivator bit the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood to unleash a secret magic. It instantly gave him a burst of speed, and yet, before it could get him very far, electricity danced around Meng Hao as the Lightning Cauldron appeared. Rumbling echoed out as he then switched places with the man.

In that moment of transposition, the middle-aged Demonic cultivator let

out a hoarse shout of astonishment. Suddenly, he was no longer far off in the distance. Furthermore, the sudden burst of speed was not helping him escape, but was actually helping to hasten him toward death!

That was because directly ahead of him... was Meng Hao!

It was almost as if he had taken the initiative to charge at Meng Hao. Just when he was about to change directions, Meng Hao suddenly waved a finger.

Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

The Demonic cultivator's body lurched to a halt, and he hung there in midair, coughing up blood as Meng Hao strode toward him through the air, waving his finger a second time.

Demon Sealing, Seventh Hex!

Massive amounts of Karma appeared in response to the wave of his hand. It transformed into a mark which completely sealed the Demonic cultivator's Karma. Because Meng Hao had absorbed the Paragon's blood, his Demon Sealing magical techniques had experienced explosive changes. All of a sudden, his Seventh Hex was revealing a new transformation.

"Seal the eyes, remove sight!

"Seal the nose, remove smell!

"Seal the throat, remove speech!

"Seal the ears, remove hearing!

"Seal the senses, remove reaction!

"Seal the world, seal EVERYTHING!"

Everything... by means of Karma!

The Demonic Cultivator screamed as, all of a sudden, his entire world went blank. He could feel nothing, and sense nothing, not even heat or cold, or auras!

It was as if everything had vanished, and he was faced with pitch-black

nothingness. He could not see, hear, smell, or sense anything!

“NO!!” He trembled as he realized that, not only had he lost connection with everything, but his cultivation base was also locked in place. He couldn’t flee even if he wanted to.

Meng Hao appeared in front of him, eyes bloodshot and face cold. He lifted his hand, and that hand suddenly seemed to transform into a Blood Demon head!

“Demonic Cultivator Horde, that which you have taken away from Chu Yuyan, will be taken back by me!” The words were spoken softly, but they were like an icy wind. Unfortunately for the Demonic cultivator, he couldn’t hear them at all.

Meng Hao’s hand touched the man’s forehead, and a tremor ran down through the man. His body withered up, but he was incapable of screaming. His life force, his cultivation base, everything that was him... was sucked away by Meng Hao... and transferred into Chu Yuyan!

This was none other than... the Blood Demon Grand Magic!

Chapter 1066: Elder Hai Sheng!

It is impossible to even describe the pain of having one's life force absorbed by the Blood Demon Grand Magic. Only someone who has experienced it could possibly know the feeling. If you had to liken it to something, it would be like having an acidic liquid injected into your veins. As it filled your body, it would melt your flesh and blood, transforming your innards into a shapeless mass.

Then it would be slowly extracted as life force. In this case, Meng Hao acted like a bridge, delivering that life force to Chu Yuyan.

If the Demonic cultivator could cry out right now, it wouldn't lessen the pain, he could at least vent some of the torment he was experiencing. Instead, the pain simply existed in his heart as an undispellable torment.

He... couldn't even open his mouth. Nor could he see what was happening. However, he could feel everything that was occurring inside of him, and in fact, those feelings were amplified, causing him to experience what was essentially unspeakable torture.

If he could do anything, the first thing he would think to do would be to die instantly!

If he had a chance to do things over, if he had the power to reverse time, he would definitely refuse to participate in this plan!

Unfortunately, there are no such things as second chances!

Meng Hao's face was like ice as he stared at the Demonic cultivator's body slowly withering up. Soon, he was nothing more than a sack of flesh and bones, his life force drained.

Finally, Meng Hao loosened his grip, and the man began to fall down. Then the wind caught him, and he dissolved into dust.... His entire person had been absorbed by the Blood Demon Grand Magic and sent into Chu Yuyan.

Moments ago, the flame of her life force had been dim and barely flickering. Now, it was brighter. Her vitality was somewhat restored, and

her face was no longer the pale of death, but rather, had some color to it.

However... Meng Hao knew that all of that was temporary. For every day that the poison remained in Chu Yuyan, she would continue to weaken, and would eventually die.

As he held her in his arms, his eyes flickered with focus and determination. He took a deep breath, then carefully placed some seals onto Chu Yuyan and the poison inside of her. Doing so would ensure that she would be able to cling to life a bit longer. Finally, he gently placed her into his bag of holding, then looked up and began to speed toward the Nine Seas God World.

It was time to do some killing!

And the first person on his list to kill was Long Tianhai!

It didn't matter where Long Tianhai was, or who was protecting him; Meng Hao was determined to kill him. That determination would not lessen, no matter what Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling trouble might occur as a result. He would definitely give vent to the murderous rage in his heart.

"Long Tianhai, you shall DIE!

"Demonic Cultivator Horde, I hereby VOW... that one day the Ninth Mountain and Sea will have NO Sea Demons!" His voice echoed up, piercing into the Heavens, which responded with rumbling like claps of thunder!

This was no ordinary promise, this was a vow!

Meng Hao's killing intent towered into the Heavens, and it was in the midst of that rage that he uttered this vow!

Almost in the same moment that his thunder-like words echoed out, the entire Ninth Sea shuddered. Even the Ninth Mountain, which rested ponderously out in the starry sky, trembled in response.

The four planets also shook. It wasn't just the Ninth Mountain and Sea, though. As of that moment, the Eighth Mountain, the Seventh Mountain,

the Sixth Mountain... all the way to the First Mountain, as well as all of their respective Seas... all trembled.

That trembling caused numerous cultivators' hearts to thump. In addition, the nine Xuanwu turtles on the tops of the Mountains of the Mountain and Sea Realm all looked up and let out a powerful howl, as if they were bearing witness to something they would fix firmly in mind!

The matter pertaining to the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm was still on the minds of numerous entities in the Mountain and Sea Realm. Therefore, what was happening now caused all of those people to gasp.

Simultaneously, the entire Ninth Sea roared, as if the will of the sea were enraged by what Meng Hao had just said. The members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde were all born in the Ninth Sea, and were essentially its children. If Meng Hao were some ordinary cultivator, then his words wouldn't have mattered, and would not have caused such a stir.

However... he was not some ordinary cultivator!

He was the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm! He was a member of the League of Demon Sealers! Although few people knew who he was, the Mountain and Sea Realm itself knew. The Nine Mountains knew, as did the Nine Seas!

Of course, though they knew of these matters, until Meng Hao formally became the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, there would be no direct connection between all of them. The only things in place were rules preventing them from interfering with him.

But now that Meng Hao had uttered his vow, the Ninth Sea seethed. It was completely shaken, and yet in the end... it chose to maintain silence.

Meng Hao sped through the air in a beam of light, splitting the Ninth Sea apart as he flew. At the same time, his aura caused countless sea beasts to charge in his direction with murderous intent.

As they neared, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes.

He waved his hand, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to appear. Expression icy, he coldly said, "Detonate!"

One word caused the Essence of Divine Flame to erupt. A massive boom could be heard as it transformed into a heavenly fire that rained down in all directions.

Any sea beasts which the fire touched let out miserable shrieks as they were burnt to ash. Some managed to dive down into the water, but a moment later, the flames entered the water, causing the temperature to soar. More screams could be heard, and the corpses of various sea beasts began to rise up from the depths.

Meng Hao didn't slow down at all. As he sped along, the sea around him boiled, and any sea beasts which came near him were instantly scalded to death!

It was an endless slaughter!

The sea began to turn as red as blood!

However, almost in the same moment that Meng Hao left Seajacket Island and began to speed toward the Nine Seas God World, all of a sudden, the surface of the sea up ahead of him rose up to form a massive wall of seawater, blocking his path. Next, three more walls of seawater rose up, two on either side of him, and one behind. He was now blocked from four directions.

The four walls of seawater linked together, forming a huge cage with Meng Hao trapped inside. Even his aura was incapable of escaping.

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked around, then gave a cold harrumph which echoed out in all directions. A moment later, the wall of water in front of him rippled, and a face appeared. Shockingly, it was not the face of a cultivator, but rather, an enormous Sea Dragon.

It was pitch black and matchlessly vicious, and its eyes glittered with cold arrogance as it looked at Meng Hao.

Standing on top of the dragon's head was an old man with his hands clasped behind his back. He wore the long robes of the Nine Seas God World, and his face was a mass of derision as he gazed down at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He recognized this old man. He was not an ordinary cultivator, but rather a Demonic cultivator, the same person Meng Hao had fought when he first arrived in the Nine Seas God World. Elder Hai Sheng! 1

"Come looking to die, you old fart?" Meng Hao said, his voice as cold as a winter wind.

"Every dog has its day, Meng Hao," Elder Hai Sheng replied, his voice cracking like thunder and filled with intense, venomous hatred. "I have to admit, the Demonic Cultivator Horde underestimated you. The Seajacket Island plan failed, and the island itself was destroyed. However, with me here... you'll die all the same!

"Don't try to escape my little death trap. It will only open up after someone gets killed. Anyone who tries to force it open, even me, will be hit with a shocking backlash. It's special that way. For the same reason, nobody outside can see what happens in here. Oh, and the natural laws have been changed so that you can't use that teleportation cauldron either!!

"And if you're thinking of trying to get Granny Nine and Ling Yunzi to come save you, well, let's put it this way; the Demonic Cultivator Horde has prepared long and hard to kill you. Granny Nine and Ling Yunzi are currently being delayed by the Demonic Cultivator Horde Patriarchs!

"Nobody will be coming here to interfere or to save you!

"Today, you absolutely, positively WILL die!" Elder Hai Sheng stared at Meng Hao, intense killing intent flickering in his eyes as he waited to see how Meng Hao would react to his words. Specifically, he was waiting for a look of despair. He didn't just want to kill Meng Hao, he wanted to see him absolutely hopeless and terrified, whereupon he would torture him to death.

That was the only way to ease the hatred in his heart!

"Today is the day you will receive retribution for slaughtering the members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde from Planet South Heaven's Milky Way Sea!" growled Elder Hai Sheng through gritted teeth. "I sent my

only descendant to Planet South Heaven in the hopes that he would be able to acquire Immortal destiny and achieve true Immortal Ascension!

“But you, you killed him, Meng Hao, damn you! Before his mind awoke, you killed him!

“Not only did you sever his hope of true Immortal Ascension, you also severed my bloodline!” His words echoed out, causing the walls of seawater to vibrate.

“Look, you big windbag,” Meng Hao said coolly, “I’ve killed lots of people. You think I remember which one you’re talking about?” He casually took out the Lightning Cauldron and gave it a try, but sure enough, it didn’t work.

His words sent Elder Hai Sheng’s rage into the sky. Bellowing, he waved his hand, causing the Sea Dragon to roar and charge toward Meng Hao, mouth gaping. In the blink of an eye, the pitch-black Sea Dragon was bearing down on Meng Hao, preparing to consume him.

Meng Hao’s eyes glinted coldly, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger. Instantly, everything began to tremble as hundreds of thousands of mountains began to descend. They formed together into a tens of thousands of mountain chains, which then merged together to form ten enormous mountains that smashed toward the Sea Dragon.

The Sea Dragon roared as it slammed into the ten gigantic mountains, then swept its tail in an attack on Meng Hao.

Whistling sounds filled the air. Meng Hao’s lips turned up into a cold smile as he extended his right hand and grabbed the Sea Dragon’s tail. Then he jerked his hand violently.

The Sea Dragon roared in surprise and pain as a massive force surged out from Meng Hao’s arm.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

A huge boom could be heard as the power of the Nine Heavens Destruction was unleashed. Nine successive attacks were unleashed, the

last of which caused the Sea Dragon to literally explode to pieces in midair.

Meng Hao then looked over at Elder Hai Sheng and murmured, “If I absorb you, then I can give Chu Yuyan a bit more life force, and a bit more time!”

Then, he turned into a murderous arrow that shot directly toward Elder Hai Sheng’s heart!

*

1. Meng Hao met Elder Hai Sheng in chapter 1038.

Chapter 1067: Deadly Catastrophe!

Elder Hai Sheng's mind trembled. Although he had found out about the failure of the Seajacket Island plan, had watched the life force slips of the other cultivators shatter, and knew that Meng Hao was probably stronger than they had anticipated, he hadn't been aware of the particulars.

Now that he saw his personally cultivated Dharma Dragon shattered by Meng Hao, his eyes glittered and, unexpectedly, he smiled.

"Now this is interesting," he said. "I didn't think I would have to use this, but it looks like my extra preparations will pay off!" He waved his right hand, causing a jade slip to fly out from his palm. It instantly shattered, causing a black mist to stream out that formed into a black-colored head. The head belonged to an old man, an old man that was clearly not Elder Hai Sheng.

It was a strange-looking head that emanated a shocking aura. It instantly began to speed towards Elder Hai Sheng, mouth gaping as if it wanted to consume him. However, as soon as it touched Elder Hai Sheng, it fused into him. Elder Hai Sheng's expression turned vicious; blue veins popped out on his forehead, and his facial features began to change. Suddenly, a second face appeared, overlapped with his original face!

He laughed cruelly, and looked even more bizarre than before as he strode forward. The instant he began to advance, his Ancient Realm cultivation base rocketed up, and, astonishingly... nine extinguished Soul Lamps appeared!

Meng Hao's eyes widened. He remembered that the last time he fought Elder Hai Sheng, the man had five extinguished Soul Lamps. Now, after superimposing with that black-colored face, it was like he was a different person. He now had a stage 9 Ancient Realm cultivation base. It was as if he had survived through extinguishing nine Soul Lamps, placing him at the peak of the mid Ancient Realm!

As his cultivation base rocketed up to stunning effect, everything in the area shook. He took a second step, and he was directly in front of Meng

Hao. His hand instantly shot forward toward Meng Hao's neck.

The speed was indescribable. He moved so fast that afterimages were left in his previous position. Furthermore, the movement of his hand seemed to contain the power of natural law, as if some of the power of the Ninth Sea had converged in his hand, becoming a personal Daoist magic.

Meng Hao's eyes were wide. After seeing the black-colored face, and the incredibly powerful cultivation base, he could tell that Elder Hai Sheng was far stronger than him. Despite being in the Immortal Emperor Realm, he still felt a sensation of deadly crisis. If an opponent like this managed to seize the upper hand in the fight, it would be very difficult for Meng Hao to reverse the situation!

The only way to win... was to seize the initiative, and keep it the entire time! That was the lone chance of securing victory!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent and the desire to do battle! From the moment he had begun to practice cultivation until now, this was the most powerful opponent he had ever faced!

Fighting someone like this was sure to be a huge challenge for him, and would require absolute focus!

"Now I really feel like fighting!" Eyes flickering, he didn't back up. Instead, even as Elder Hai Sheng's hand shot out, Meng Hao shoved his own hand forward. As he did, he unleashed his own secret magic, merging his 123 Immortal meridians into a divine ability.

True Immortal fleshly body!

His palm closed into a fist, and he flew above Elder Hai Sheng.

Although he couldn't seize control of the battle in terms of cultivation base, at the very least, he could seek to occupy the high ground. If he wasn't able to gain that advantage in this first exchange, it would be difficult to recover from.

"My true form is a Sea Dragon!" Elder Hai Sheng laughed coldly. "The heads of dragons are magically cultivated to be their strongest points! Are you TRYING to get yourself killed!?" He could tell what Meng Hao was

trying to do, but considering the level of cultivation base involved, he paid no heed. He raised his right hand, and his momentum did not stop, but grew even more powerful!

“Digging your own grave!” he said with a cold smile, then reached out with a clutching motion.

At the same time, Meng Hao’s momentum was also building. As his fist closed in on Elder Hai Sheng, it gave rise to a massive tempest, the center of which was a powerful vortex. The vortex slammed into Elder Hai Sheng’s hand, causing a deafening boom.

The tempest collapsed and the vortex fell to pieces. Cracking sounds echoed out from within Meng Hao, like breaking bones. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and he was sent staggering backward, clearly seriously injured. However, his Eternal stratum immediately spun into action.

Elder Hai Sheng stopped in place, and was actually shoved downward by several meters. However, all he did was let out a cold harrumph and then shoot back toward Meng Hao.

“No wonder the Seajacket Island plan failed.... If I hadn’t prepared well, I might not have been able to kill you. But this is the Ninth Sea, my home ground. I can borrow the power of the Ninth Sea. Even if you get stronger than you are now, you’re still dead!” Face twisted viciously, he closed in on Meng Hao and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, an illusory sea appeared around him, which rumbled toward Meng Hao in attack.

As it neared, a gigantic sea turtle appeared in the middle of it, which roared as it smashed toward Meng Hao.

As Elder Hai Sheng neared, Meng Hao was able to finally determine the difference between the Immortal Emperor Realm and that of a cultivator with nine extinguished Soul Lamps.

That difference was considerable... but not so vast that it left him in despair!

“You’re going to borrow power from the Ninth Sea?” Meng Hao asked

coldly. The starstone in his right eye flickered, and as the giant sea turtle bore down on him, he transformed into a planet that shot forward in attack.

When Meng Hao slammed into the sea, his planet-form collapsed, and he reappeared, coughing up blood. However, in almost the same moment, he transformed into a huge golden roc that pierced through the sea and the sea turtle. He was completely soaked in blood, but his energy was even stronger than before. Radiating madness, he appeared directly in front of Elder Hai Sheng, slashing at him with his claws. A huge rumble could be heard as the two of them tumbled backward away from each other.

“You overestimate yourself!” By this point, Elder Hai Sheng was now only about thirty meters away from the surface of the sea, but he didn’t seem to care at all. He waved his hand, instantly causing one of his Soul Lamps to fly out and speed toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao continued to back up, coughing up blood, body withering. At the same time, his Eternal stratum was madly restoring him. Not pausing, he once again went on the offensive. This time, he summoned the Ninth Mountain, along with the sun and the moon, a composite Daoist magic that slammed into the Soul Lamp. The resulting explosion sent shockwaves in all directions. Meng Hao’s body was on the verge of collapse, but thanks to his Eternal stratum, it didn’t phase him at all as he charged downwards again. Next, his Dharma Idol of 33 Heavens appeared, focusing all of his power on another attack against Elder Hai Sheng.

Elder Hai Sheng snorted coldly and waved his hand. Immediately, ripples spread out, transforming into a Ghost Face, which shrieked as it pounced toward Meng Hao. As it neared, Meng Hao took a deep breath and clenched his hand into a fist.

He punched, not with an ordinary punch, but... with the might of body cultivation!

The Life-Extermination Fist!

As the fist sailed through the air, all of the life force in the area seemed to vanish, even Meng Hao’s. Everything seemed cut off, as if this fist

contained a will of death, a fist to exterminate all life!

For the first time, Elder Hai Sheng's expression flickered. However, he didn't hesitate, extending both hands in front of him. Shockingly, a dragon scale appeared, like a shield, which Meng Hao's fist slammed into.

A massive boom echoed out, and a huge depression appeared in the surface of the water. Elder Hai Sheng was shoved backward beyond his control, landing him in the water below.

"Life-Extermination Fist," he gasped. "That was actually the Life-Extermination Fist...."

"However, you were probably barely able to use it!" His eyes flashed with coldness, and he was just about to fly back up into the air when Meng Hao suddenly smiled.

His goal this entire time had been to get Elder Hai Sheng into the water!

Getting Elder Hai Sheng into that position was the most deadly tactic he could employ. He only did this because of his inability to use the Lightning Cauldron; were it not for that, he wouldn't have allowed himself to be so seriously injured in such a short period of time.

If he himself had gone into the water to try to lure Elder Hai Sheng down, or perhaps used some other methods, he might have had some success. However, all other methods contained certain flaws. That was why he had chosen this particular tactic.

It was difficult to pull off, but was the best way to push him downward.

Without his Eternal stratum, Meng Hao would already have collapsed into pieces. Even with it, he was only recovering slowly. Wiping the blood from his mouth, he extended his right hand and waved his finger toward the surface of the water.

"Flame!" he said softly.

When Elder Hai Sheng saw Meng Hao's expression, his own face fell. At the same time, flames suddenly appeared in the water beneath the enclosed trap of seawater walls. Apparently, flames had been there all

along!

It was Divine Flame, the same Divine Flame Meng Hao had used to kill the sea beasts earlier. Essence of Divine Flame!

The Essence of Divine Flame erupted, shooting through the seawater walls to surround Elder Hai Sheng!

The flames rose up in the blink of an eye, turning the water into a sea of flames, a world of fire, a heaven and earth created from the Essence of Divine Flame within which elder Hai Sheng was completely imprisoned.

“Divine Flame! Impossible! I clearly saw this flame outside in the Ninth Sea! Even if it possesses Essence, it still shouldn’t be able to get into my death trap so quickly!!” Elder Hai Sheng’s face instantly filled with disbelief. The Demonic Cultivator Horde had done extensive investigations into Meng Hao in their preparations to kill him. How could they have missed something as powerful as Essence of Divine Flame?!

At the same time, Elder Hai Sheng could sense that this sea of flames could definitely hurt him. Thankfully, the injuries weren’t very serious yet, and if he escaped quickly, the effects would be minimal.

“Piddling Divine Flame. I’m not sure how you managed to pull off this trick. But your threat... is in vain! You can’t use this flame to kill me! How juvenile!” Elder Hai Sheng snorted coldly, and was just about to charge out of the sea of flames toward Meng Hao. Once he did so, Meng Hao’s gambit to trap and kill him would immediately fail.

He had one other option, which was to go downward into the sea, but that would mean he would have to break the sea wall seal, and he would suffer the backlash attack. That was something he wouldn’t do except as a last resort.

“What if you can’t get out?” asked Meng Hao, his voice cold. After absorbing the Paragon’s blood, all of his magical techniques and divine abilities had become more powerful. The Divine Flame was Essence, and because of the Essence power in the Paragon’s blood, the Divine Flame was far more powerful. That was why it had been able to pierce through the sea walls!

Unfortunately, it had only been able to pierce through them, not completely destroy them. That would have taken much longer.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao's voice rang out, Elder Hai Sheng tried to escape from the sea of flames. In response, Meng Hao waved his finger.

“Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!”

As soon as the Hexing magic was unleashed, Elder Hai Sheng stopped in mid-movement. His face fell as his attempt to escape failed completely. He was surrounded by flames, causing him to rage inwardly.

Meng Hao paid a bit of a price to unleash the Eighth Hex, causing blood to ooze out of his mouth. However, he ignored the injury and waved his right hand again to unleash a variety of magical techniques and divine abilities on Elder Hai Sheng.

Risking serious injury to himself, he shoved Elder Hai Sheng deeper into the sea of flames.

Elder Hai Sheng trembled, and was just about to recover from the Eighth Hex when Meng Hao waved his finger and unleashed it again.

This happened over and over, causing Elder Hai Sheng to roar inwardly. He was incapable of escaping, and was stuck in the sea of flames. His skin began to split, and his body began to wither. Gradually, he was beginning to sense a feeling of intense crisis, as well as incredible shock. In the next moment in which he recovered, before Meng Hao could unleash more restrictive Hexes, he bit the tip of his tongue and spat out some blood, which turned into a Blood Dragon that charged toward Meng Hao. Simultaneously, Elder Hai Sheng attempted to make another break for freedom.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered and he took a deep breath. Once again, he unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist. His body trembled, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. The fist strike instantly shattered any hopes Elder Hai Sheng had of extricating himself. The Blood Dragon was shattered, and the power of the strike slammed into Elder Hai Sheng, whereupon Meng Hao once again utilized the Eighth Hex.

BOOM!

A ferocious expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face. He once again launched an attack, waving his hand. Even as Elder Hai Sheng recovered, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture and summoned the Paragon Bridge. It rumbled down viciously toward Elder Hai Sheng.

"Damn you, Meng Hao!!" Elder Hai Sheng roared. He tried again to free himself but failed. The injuries caused by the sea of flames continued to intensify. All protective magical items that he used were useless. No matter what he did, he failed. Meanwhile, his skin was splitting more dramatically, and he was withering up.

What filled him with even more fear was the thought of, after being stuck within the sea of flames for too long, the Divine Flame boring into his body and burning up his internal organs!

Chapter 1068: Who Dares to Save Him!?

Popping sounds echoed out in all directions from within the region of scorching flames as intense pain wracked Elder Hai Sheng. Soon, his internal organs began to burn, intensifying both the pain and the sensation of crisis!

The shadow of death loomed over him, and he could sense that if this went on much longer, he... would die!

He was surrounded by a sea of flames that was rapidly burning him to ash!

He had never even considered the possibility that he might lose this battle, or that he might actually die. He hadn't arrogantly assumed that he could win with only five extinguished Soul Lamps. Instead, he had immediately attacked with his trump card, a Soul Jade given to him by a late Ancient Realm expert from the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

The fact that he was still in a state of critical danger, even after his cultivation base had risen to the level of nine extinguished Soul Lamps... caused Elder Hai Sheng's heart to tremble.

"Just what good fortune has this guy come across to become so powerful? Most importantly, it's not just a matter of raw power; he's vicious and merciless, plus extremely conniving!" As Elder Hai Sheng looked at Meng Hao, he felt an intense dread and terror rising up in him.

Meng Hao was an important person in the sect, so the Demonic Cultivator Horde had gone to great lengths to ensure that no one of the Dao Realm would be able to interfere. Furthermore, even peak Ancient realm cultivators were obstructed. Because of that, only two of the Demonic Cultivator Horde Elders had been sent out as part of the plan. That was their limit.

That was more than enough power to slaughter an Immortal Realm cultivator. Furthermore, Elder Hai Sheng had the Soul Jade as his trump card. To the Demonic Cultivator Horde, the power of nine extinguished Soul Lamps that he wielded was more than enough to clinch a victory.

They assumed that nothing unexpected would happen that could upset the balance.

However, they... still underestimated Meng Hao!

Booms rang out. Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot as he levied shocking attacks against Elder Hai Sheng, over and over again. Elder Hai Sheng couldn't escape, and was forced to remain within the sea of flames, growing closer and closer to death.

Every time he used the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, Meng Hao had to pay a heavy price, and blood oozed out of his mouth. And yet, he attacked relentlessly and without stop. However viciously he treated others, he treated himself more viciously. That was the trump card he could use to secure victory against a more powerful opponent!

"Dammit!!" Elder Hai Sheng's skin was on fire, and he was wracked with intense pain. He was almost on the verge of going mad, and the black-colored face superimposed over his own was beginning to flicker. Looking completely bizarre, he quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture. When he looked up, the pitch black face let out a soundless roar. Elder Hai Sheng breathed in, raised both of his hands up, then shoved them out toward Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao... DIE!"

As his hands rose up, black mist poured out of his body, spreading out to fill the entire area with a sea of black fog.

Suddenly, Elder Hai Sheng was replaced by a gigantic heart. The heart was pitch black, and radiated wickedness and mystery. Furthermore, an archaic aura erupted out from it.

In unison with the aura's eruption, cracking booms as loud as thunder could be heard coming from the heart.

Ba-bump.

Ba-bump!

BA-BUMP!

The echoing sound caused Meng Hao's face to flicker. Every movement of the bizarre heart caused the sound to echo out, along with a massive power that slammed down onto Meng Hao like a mountain!

At the same time, Meng Hao's own heart was stabbed with pain. Every beat of the bizarre pitch-black heart caused strange power to stab against him like invisible blades!

Meng Hao's heart felt like it was about to be ripped in two!

His cultivation base, his body, everything felt stabbing pain. Blood spurted out as the black heart hung there in midair, battering against the sea of flames.

This bizarre magical technique caused Meng Hao to begin to pant anxiously. His face was pale white, and his heart felt like it was about to burst out of his chest. He gritted his teeth and raised his hand, ignoring the intense pain.

When he waved his hand... eleven black pods flew out.

"Magical Pod Soldiers!" he cried. Popping sounds could be heard as the eleven black pods immediately transformed into eleven black imps. They were eyeless, with vicious, gaping mouths. Piercing screams could be heard as they rushed toward the black heart.

Elder Hai Sheng was instantly shocked by what was happening. Not only was Meng Hao unfamiliar with his own divine ability, this magic of turning tiny black pods into soldiers was something that Elder Hai Sheng had never even heard of before. The Demonic Cultivator Horde's investigation hadn't mentioned anything about this.

Even more shocking to Elder Hai Sheng was that, as the blackpod imps charged, their screams merged together into a shocking sound that caused the materialized black heart to begin to tremble. Then, it started fading, and the black fog that covered the sea started to retract.

Most unbelievable of all was that the pitch-black face that had appeared after crushing the jade slip earlier... let out a cry of alarm!

At that point, the blackpod imps descended onto the black-colored heart,

merging into it as if to possess it!

“Impossible!” exclaimed Elder Hai Sheng, astonished.

This was the most dangerous thing about the blackpod imps; as soon as they appeared, the first thing they did was select a target to possess. It was only because of Meng Hao’s Life Death Hexing that he had been able to subjugate them. Furthermore, he had brought them under control one at a time. If all eleven had come at him simultaneously, he would also have been forced to flee.

The black heart was shaking in struggle, and the black mist was roiling backward. In the blink of an eye, massive rumbling could be heard as the heart shattered. Elder Hai Sheng once again appeared in the open, letting out a miserable shriek which echoed out in all directions.

No blackpod imps were visible on his person. All eleven were inside of him, causing the pitch black face superimposed over his own to twist as if it were struggling.

“What are these things!?” he said, voice trembling with fear. Suddenly, his cultivation base changed, quickly phasing between nine extinguished soul lamps and his original five.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he took advantage of the situation to close in. His right hand waved, materializing a divine ability, shoving Elder Hai Sheng back down into the sea of flames.

His unstable cultivation base made it difficult for Elder Hai Sheng to fight back against the power of the sea of flames. Also, because of the huge change to his cultivation base, flames wreathed his body, and his organs burned even more quickly.

“SCREWWWW OOOOOOFFFFFFFFF!” Elder Hai Sheng roared madly. The sensation of imminent death was intense, and as he roared, his body grew larger. The scale on his forehead instantly spread out to cover him, and his two horns grew longer. In only a few breaths’ worth of time, he had transformed into a Sea Dragon!

He was now a huge, 300-meter long Sea Dragon!

This was his true form!

He was a pitch-black Sea Dragon, and as soon as he appeared, he threw his head back and howled, using some unknown technique to cause his whole body to distort. Popping sounds could be heard as the blackpod imps were suddenly ejected out of him.

However... as his body grew larger, he became more exposed, and flames covered him, burning him. In the blink of an eye, many of his scales were melted, revealing bones underneath.

“Meng Hao, I’m gonna EAT YOU!!” he roared. Enraged, his body twisted and his huge head shot madly toward Meng Hao. His eyes were crimson, and a foul wind blasted out as he opened his mouth wide to consume Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. His face was a bit pale, but as the dragon closed in on him, he took a deep breath, then clenched his fist... and punched!

One punch. Not the Life-Exterminating Fist, but rather... the Self-Immolation Fist!

A Devilish aura covered over all other auras as the punch shot forward. This was a punch that was willing to pay any price to succeed, as if this fist strike could put one on the path to being a Devil!

Colors flashed in the sky and the wind screamed. The sea walls of the death trap trembled. The attacking Sea Dragon shrank back, letting out a defiant roar as the punch landed!

BOOOOMMMMMM!

A massive, ear-splitting boom rang out. Sea Dragon Elder Hai Sheng let out a bloodcurdling scream. He ceased attacking and attempted to dive back down into the sea of flames. Meng Hao coughed up eight consecutive mouthfuls of blood, and his vision swam. He then bit down viciously on his tongue, forcing himself to regain clarity.

Terror shone in the Sea Dragon’s eyes as he sank down into the sea of flames. He made no further attempts to flee, but instead sped downward

toward the death trap sea wall located under water. Shockingly, he was willing to be hit with the backlash that would result from trying to break out.

Elder Hai Sheng had to escape, otherwise he would die!!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Sea Dragon Elder Hai Sheng went mad. He battered the wall nine times before a huge hole appeared. His Sea Dragon body trembled as a massive backlash force slammed into him.

He was instantly covered in lacerations. Scales flew off in all directions, and his flesh was mangled. The backlash was intense, even leaving Meng Hao shocked.

In the blink of an eye, the Sea Dragon body was on the verge of shattering into pieces. Elder Hai Sheng let out a huge roar, and massive quantities of black mist began to pour out of him, which bore the brunt of the backlash. That was the power of the Soul Jade. After a moment, the backlash power faded away, and Elder Hai Sheng forced his way out into the Ninth Sea.

His Sea Dragon form was severely injured, and he was about to lose consciousness. He used all of the power he could muster to swim out into the Ninth Sea.

“Mother Ninth Sea, save me!!” he implored as he sped along. He had been born in the Ninth Sea, and grown up there, so to him, the Ninth Sea was his mother!

Almost as soon as his voice rang out, nourishing power from the Ninth Sea poured into his body, healing and restoring him.

Meng Hao was not too far behind him, eyes flickering with killing intent. When he saw the Sea Dragon’s body recovering, his gaze turned as sharp as daggers, and he let out a vicious cry:

“Ninth Sea, if you dare to save him, then I guarantee, when I achieve the Dao, the Ninth Mountain will have NO SEA!”

Chapter 1069: The Ninth Sea is Enraged!

“What a joke!” said Elder Hai Sheng’s true form, the huge Sea Dragon. It began to laugh uproariously as it recovered.

“The Ninth Sea is the Mother of the entire Demonic Cultivator Horde! You couldn’t cause even a tiny portion of it to tremble. It’s so incredible that not even Ji Tian would dare to say something as crazy as that.

“And you, a petty, insignificant cultivator, actually dare to threaten Mother Ninth Sea?

“When you achieve your Dao, the Ninth Mountain will have NO SEA?

“How arrogant! How ignorant! Who gave you the gall to say something like that!?” Sea Dragon Elder Hai Sheng laughed scornfully, as if he had just heard the most ridiculous joke in the world.

However, almost in the exact same moment that his voice rang out, the Ninth Sea suddenly began to churn. The sound of crashing waves rose up into the starry sky!

That instantly caused Elder Hai Sheng to stare in shock.

Meng Hao was not an ordinary cultivator. Although he might seem weak to many people, the truth was... to the Nine Mountains and the Nine Seas, Meng Hao... was the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

From the moment he formally became a member of the League of Demon Sealers, and absorbed the drop of Paragon Nine Seals’ blood, it ensured that when he achieved the Dao, he would become the Mountain and Sea Lord!

A status and position like that meant that whatever he said... could cause Heaven and Earth to shake, the Nine Mountains to tremble, and the Nine Seas to quaver!

The Ninth Sea was suddenly silent.

Suddenly, the massive restorative power pouring into Sea Dragon Elder Hai Sheng abruptly stopped. He trembled violently, and his eyes went wide

with disbelief and profound astonishment.

Born and raised in the Ninth Sea, he had risen from being a sea beast into a Demonic cultivator, and could be considered a cherished child of the Ninth Sea. In fact, any Demonic cultivator could be called a child of the Ninth Sea!

When a cherished child of the Ninth Sea was injured, the Ninth Sea could send it restorative power. That was something all Demonic cultivators knew about, and was also why they considered the Ninth Sea to be their mother!

That was also why the Demonic Cultivator Horde could occupy such a prominent position within the Nine Seas God World. They were different from the ordinary cultivators. And right now... Mother Ninth Sea heard Meng Hao's threat, and... ceased healing the Sea Dragon.

The profound meaning of such an action was mind-numbing, even suffocating, and revealed something that was shocking to the extreme.

"This is impossible....

"Who is he? Is this happening because he's a member of the Echelon? It must be because of that! That's why Mother Ninth Sea is forsaking me!" Elder Hai Sheng shivered as he came to his own conclusion on the matter. However, he was still not sure, and couldn't quite admit that such an answer was correct, or even made sense.

Without the restorative powers provided by the Ninth Sea, Elder Hai Sheng's Sea Dragon body ceased to recover. Blood flowed out, and his dilapidated form continued to flee in despair.

Meng Hao pursued, drawing closer and closer. Although he was also injured, his Eternal stratum was continuing to restore him, and gradually, his body was returning to its normal state!

His eyes flickered with killing intent, and he waved a finger to unleash the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. Elder Hai Sheng's Sea Dragon body trembled, and he lurched to a stop.

In that moment, Meng Hao closed in. To him, the Ancient Realm power

of five extinguished Soul Lamps was definitely something he could contend with, considering he was in the Immortal Emperor Realm.

He extended his right hand, and his palm turned bright red. Suddenly, it didn't look like a palm, but a Blood Demon head, whose gaping maw lunged at the Sea Dragon.

"Mother, save me!!" cried Elder Hai Shen, a sensation of imminent doom sweeping through his mind. He let out a miserable shriek as Meng Hao's Blood Demon Grand Magic descended. It was in this moment that, all of a sudden, the Ninth Sea filled with a gale force wind, and huge waves kicked up. Once again, a gentle power flowed into the Sea Dragon from all directions.

Sea Dragon-form Hai Sheng, who had been hovering on the brink of death, suddenly felt his life force flourishing. Filled with joy at the power pouring into him, he shot off toward the horizon.

Meng Hao's killing blow struck nothing but air.

Looking up slowly, his eyes were shot with blood as he cried: "NINTH SEA!"

The sound echoed out in all directions, causing the sea water to seethe violently.

Jubilant laughter rang out from the Sea Dragon's mouth. Not only had he not perished, his body was rapidly recovering. Mother Ninth Sea had not abandoned him!

"The Echelon is NOTHING. You can't kill me this time, Meng Hao, and there's nothing you can do about it!!

"You can only watch as I go back to the sect. You just wait, Meng Hao... I swear that not only will I kill you, I'll also kill all of your friends!

"I know about that Elder Brother of yours named Chen Fan, and your Junior Brother Li Fugui. Don't worry, I'll make sure they die slowly! I guarantee that they will regret ever being born in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“And as for your old flame, well, HAHAAHA! I know exactly how to deal with the poison, but I’m not going to tell you. That poison can only be expelled by someone in the Dao Realm, and even then, it would be very difficult. Brace yourself, Meng Hao. You’re going to have to watch as she withers away and dies!” Sea Dragon Hai Sheng’s roars of joy at having escaped from the grip of death rang out. Apparently, he was so happy that he forgot to even control himself.

The assistance provided by the Ninth Sea caused a sudden increase of speed that caused him to tumble through the air. Meng Hao smiled, a smile of fury and coldness.

“I want you dead, so you won’t be going anywhere!” The will of the Ninth Sea was vast and boundless; however, because of the laws in place, it couldn’t actually do anything to Meng Hao himself. However, if it was given a choice between Meng Hao and its own child, it would chose the latter!

To the Ninth Sea, although, it was not a situation of being given a choice... it was being directly provoked!

Although it was in awe of Meng Hao’s identity, it did not believe that Meng Hao himself was a threat!

The future was open to far too many possibilities.

As the Sea Dragon attempted to make its escape, Meng Hao understood everything. Then, a cold smile gleamed in his eyes, and the killing intent there seethed, not toward the Demonic cultivator... but toward the Ninth Sea!

He waved his hand, causing a Blood Demon head to materialize. In the blink of an eye, it split into 123 separate Blood Demon heads, which swirled around into a blood-colored globe. Then, Meng Hao looked at the fleeing Sea Dragon, and suddenly, the Lightning Cauldron appeared. The cauldron flickered, and Meng Hao vanished.

When he reappeared, he was in the Sea Dragon’s former position. Without a moment’s hesitation, he lifted his hand, within which appeared a long spear with a sharp bone spearhead, and a haft carved from the

World Tree. As soon as the spear appeared, Meng Hao hurled it out in front of him. He imbued the spear with all of his strength, injuring himself in the process, and spitting up blood.

The spear whistled through the air, piercing the water, backed by all of Meng Hao's Immortal Emperor will, and all of his killing intent. It moved with indescribable speed, instantly slashing through the water and tearing it apart!

Almost in the exact moment that the spear flew out, Sea Dragon Elder Hai Sheng appeared where Meng Hao had just been.

There he was, right in the middle of the Blood Demon spell formation that Meng Hao had just set up. Almost as soon as it appeared, the surrounding 123 Blood Demon heads roared and shot toward the Sea Dragon.

Everything happened so quickly that Elder Hai Sheng was stunned. As the Blood Demon heads pounced, and he let out a bloodcurdling scream.

"Mother, save me!!"

As soon as the sound rang out, nourishing power flowed out from the Ninth Sea. However... even as the power fused into the Sea Dragon's body, the long spear arrived, piercing through the air.

The speed was impossible to describe. Elder Hai Sheng's eyes went wide as the spear slammed into his head and pierced all the way through, causing a fountain of blood to spray out. Too much force backed the blow, and the Sea Dragon's body was sent spinning. In that same moment, the Blood Demon heads landed on him and began to absorb him madly.

The Sea Dragon should have been dead already, but the restorative power of the Ninth Sea was boundless, and had kept the flame of his life force flickering. As of this moment, however, the Sea Dragon collapsed.

In that moment in which he was passing away into death, Meng Hao arrived. He slammed his hand onto the Sea Dragon's head, using his Sousearch magic to rifle through about thirty percent of Hai Sheng's memories.

By the time that thirty percent was absorbed, Elder Hai Sheng was completely dead!

Simultaneously, a burst of rage rose up from the Ninth Sea, transforming into a massive power that caused everything in the sea to tremble explosively. The power then surged down toward Meng Hao as if to slaughter him.

“How dare you!” he said, snorting. He knew that the Ninth Sea could afford to ignore him and save the Sea Dragon, but it couldn’t hurt him. After all, he was the likely future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

As his voice echoed out, the power surging down toward him suddenly stopped in place, blocked by some law. The rage of the Ninth Sea could only slowly dissipate.

The flame of the Sea Dragon’s life force was extinguished. Its soul was shattered into pieces. Only its body remained behind, continuing to receive nourishment from the Ninth Sea. However, even that rapidly faded away. Faced with the onslaught of the 123 Blood Demon heads, it was transformed into ash that sprinkled down onto the surface of the water.

Then, the Blood Demon heads flew back to circulate around Meng Hao, delivering the Sea Dragon’s life force to him. Although some of it helped Meng Hao recover, after circulating his cultivation base, he sent most of it into Chu Yuyan inside his bag of holding.

Having done these things, Meng Hao hovered there, looking coldly around at the Ninth Sea. His expression was icy, and he spoke no threatening words before turning and speeding back toward the Nine Seas God World.

However... the will of the Ninth Sea didn’t know Meng Hao’s personality. When he used words to make threats, it actually left leeway for leniency. When he said nothing... it indicated that there was a difference as incompatible as fire and water.

The matter was set. The day that Meng Hao achieved his Dao, the Mountain and Sea Realm would have him.... and no Ninth Sea. For all eternity!

“Guyiding Tri-Rain, I still have a promise to fulfill. The day that I achieve my Dao, I’ll help you to become a sea....

“As of today, I’ve already picked a good location for you. You might be a bit small at the moment, but I’ll help you grow bigger. Now... just wait... for me to achieve my Dao!”

Chapter 1070: Slaughtering a Path Through the Sect

Meng Hao's eyes flashed with determination as he transformed into a beam of light that sped through the water. He had one goal in mind, and that was to reach the Nine Seas God World and find... Long Tianhai!

Of the people who had attacked Meng Hao, the two Demonic cultivator Elders had already been killed. Of the nine Sea Realm Demons, only their highest ranking member was left alive. He was the one who had personally kidnapped Chu Yuyan, which further intensified Meng Hao's desire to kill him.

"Chu Yuyan has been afflicted with Underworld Dragon Poison, so getting some Sea Dragon heart-blood is vital to treating her!" That was something Meng Hao had gleaned from Elder Hai Sheng's memories.

It was a poison that required heart-blood from at least ten Sea Dragons to be able to dispel. The higher the cultivation base of said dragons, the more effective the antidote would be. Furthermore, Meng Hao had chosen not to seek out Sea Dragons that had not yet achieved the ability to take human form. His goal... was to get Demonic Cultivators from the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

Another thing that Meng Hao had learned from Elder Hai Sheng's memories was that Long Tianhai's true form was that of a Sea Dragon.

He shot back toward the Nine Seas God World at top speed, during which time his cultivation base continued to restore itself, and his wounds were healed. His Eternal stratum worked hard, and after the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he was back at his peak. Soon, a huge land mass appeared up ahead in the water.

It contained mountain ranges and even its own sky. It was... the Nine Seas God World!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent as he pushed harder for more speed. He sped forward, nearing the main gate of the sect, and then

stepping down onto the land of the Nine Seas God World.

As soon as he entered the sect, he saw three Demonic cultivators, who appeared to be waiting for him. As soon as they saw him, their faces involuntarily fell, revealing shock.

The fact that catching sight of Meng Hao didn't cause them to radiate killing intent, but rather shock, indicated only one thing....

They knew that Meng Hao had been set up to die on the outside!

The three Demonic cultivators' faces fell, and they started to back up. However, even in the moment that their faces flickered with surprise, Meng Hao's eyes flashed with killing intent. Considering that they only had Immortal Realm cultivation bases, to Meng Hao, they were already dead.

Meng Hao had already killed plenty of people on this day, and had experienced plenty of potentially deadly situations. His killing intent was now beyond abundant. He had no intentions of calming the situation down. He wanted people dead, and he wanted a big scene!

He wanted a slaughter of epic proportions, and a scene that caused Heaven and Earth to crumble!

He barrelled forward, waving his hand violently, causing the pressure of the Immortal Emperor to sweep out, along with a tempestuous wind. The three Demonic cultivators' faces flickered, and they tried to flee with all their power. Unfortunately for them, however, they were pinned down by the sweeping pressure.

Miserable shrieks rang out as the wind shredded them to pieces, causing the windstorm to rain blood.

In the moment that the three died, there were eight ordinary cultivators off in the distance who saw what happened. Their faces filled with shock as they saw that the killer was actually Meng Hao. They gasped and exchanged glances.

"That's Meng Hao!"

“Why is he killing people? Didn’t he and the Demonic Cultivator Horde agree to a ceasefire already?!”

“Something big must have happened. He just killed three Demonic cultivators! There’s no way the Demonic Cultivator Horde will let this stand!!” Although they were shocked, they didn’t make any attempt to interfere with Meng Hao. Were he anyone else, they would have done so, and would also have notified their superiors in the sect. But considering it was Meng Hao, they instantly hesitated.

The tempest swirled, and blood rained out of the sky. As for Meng Hao, he walked out of the bloody storm and headed straight forward... following the tug of the Karma Thread directly toward Long Tianhai’s Immortal’s cave.

It only took a moment for his divine sense to spread out and lock down the position of the Immortal’s cave. Also, he was able to sense... Long Tianhai’s aura.

He transformed into a prismatic streak of light that shot forward like lightning. Any Demonic cultivators that crossed his path were instantly cut down.

It only took a short time for the entire Nine Seas God World to be thrown into an uproar. Numerous cultivators witnessed Meng Hao slaughtering Demonic cultivators, leading to widespread shock.

His feud had escalated to the point where he figured he might as well resolve the issue with killing. Since they looked at him with hatred, he would just kill them without any further considerations!

Booms echoed out, and Meng Hao’s killing intent soared. Strangely, however, the strongest Demonic cultivators he met were merely in the Ancient Realm, with two or three extinguished Soul Lamps at that. No one stronger appeared, and in fact, it was mostly Immortal Realm Demonic cultivators who showed their faces.

Meng Hao’s eyes flashed, and he didn’t hesitate at all. The Demonic cultivators he came across looked at him with resentment and hostility, and he killed them all.

He knew that if he didn't kill them, they would try to kill him as soon as they had a chance!

If it becomes impossible to resolve things with reason, then might makes right!

Meng Hao's path of slaughter was soaked in blood and filled with bloodcurdling screams. He was like a deity of death as he drew ever closer to Long Tianhai in his Immortal's cave!!

From the moment Meng Hao had first caught sight of Long Tianhai outside of the main gate, to the slaughter of Seajacket Island, to the deadly duel with Elder Hai Sheng, to the massacre going on now within the Nine Seas God World...

Only about six hours had passed!

**

Six hours earlier....

Deep within the central mountains of the Nine Seas God World was a mighty mountain peak, atop which sat an ancient temple.

Two statues could be seen at the front of the temple, both of which held huge swords in their hands. From afar, they looked like protectors of the entire God World.

Granny Nine, Godmaster and Ling Yunzi sat cross-legged inside the temple, staring coldly at the four other Dao Realm experts who sat across from them. Two were old men who were radiating their Essence auras, and had scales on their foreheads. They were the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the Demonic Cultivator Horde. As for the other two, one was a man, the other a woman. Both had wry, apologetic smiles on their faces.

"We're all members of the same sect," the woman said softly. "We shouldn't involve ourselves in the matters of the Junior generation. I hope the three of you can understand that. Why don't we all discuss the Dao to pass the time? We don't often get opportunities to get together like this." Smiling, her eyes flickered as she waved her hand, causing a screen to appear in front of them. Depicted on that screen was an image... of Meng

Hao emerging from his Immortal's cave.

Ling Yunzi snorted coldly, but didn't say anything. He understood that right now, it was not only impossible for the three of them to do anything, all of the Ancient Realm experts in the entire sect had also been prevented from interfering.

That seemed to include not just their side, but also the cultivators from the other factions. Unfortunately... the combined power of the other three factions exceeded that of Ling Yunzi, Granny Nine, and Godmaster. The other factions also controlled slightly more Ancient Realm cultivators than they did.

However, Ling Yunzi wasn't very worried. He had already secretly warned Meng Hao to return to the sect as soon as he set foot outside, and told him that he would handle any fallout.

However, it was at that point that the screen flickered with an image of Long Tianhai facing off with Meng Hao. Everyone in the temple hall could see as the two of them started talking.

Then they saw Chu Yuyan, and Ling Yunzi's face flickered. Granny Nine and Godmaster had similar reactions. Granny Nine's face actually darkened with anger, and she shot to her feet. Immediately, the energy of the other four Dao Realm experts surged.

"Granny Nine, we have an agreement, don't we?" said one of the Dao Realm Demonic cultivators, an old man with bright red hair. "Could it be that you're actually going to break your word?"

"We Dao Realm experts already promised not to interfere in the vast enmity that exists between Meng Hao and the Demonic Cultivator Horde. Most of the Ancient Realm cultivators have also been locked down. Granny Nine, if you want to start a war, then so be it!"

"Sit tight!" Godmaster said. Granny Nine paused, and then slowly sat back down.

The images continued to play out on the screen. Soon, Meng Hao and Long Tianhai had their scuffle. When Meng Hao's energy rose up

shockingly, various expressions of surprise could be seen on the faces of the Dao Realm experts.

Next was the slaughter of the sea beasts, and the boiling of the Ninth Sea, which caused frowns to appear on the faces of the Demonic cultivators. Then Meng Hao arrived at the island, where he crushed his opponents and cast off the pressure of the Ninth Sea. With nine steps, he slaughtered eight Sea Realm Demons, and drained the other Ancient Realm Demonic cultivator dry.

The island was destroyed in shocking fashion, a scene which caused the Demonic Dao Realm experts' faces to become even more unsightly. Conversely, Ling Yunzi and Granny Nine breathed sighs of relief.

It was at that point that Elder Hai Sheng's death trap appeared, and all of a sudden, none of them could see what was happening. Granny Nine's heart began to pound, and her face flickered. Ling Yunzi couldn't hold back any longer, and he stood up.

It was at this point that one of the human Dao Realm experts, the man, laughed and moved to intercept him.

"Fellow Daoist Ling Yunzi," he said. "I've experienced some enlightenment recently regarding Time magic. Come, come. Let's meditate and appreciate it together." With that, he raised his hand, causing a resplendent beam of light to fly out that flickered with an aura of Time.

"Get the hell out of my way!" said Ling Yunzi, his eyes shining with killing intent.

The man's face darkened, and he said, "Fellow Daoist Ling Yunzi, have you forgotten our agreement? Besides, are you really going to be so insulting as to refuse to discuss the Dao with me?"

"Sit!" Godmaster said, his eyes shining with profundity.

Ling Yunzi gritted his teeth and slowly sat back down, glaring at the screen. Not much more time passed before the death trap was broken. A Sea Dragon emerged, wailing miserably, followed by a murderous Meng Hao!

Instantly, the faces of the two Demonic Dao Realm cultivators fell. Then they saw Elder Hai Sheng die, and Meng Hao threaten the Ninth Sea.

Finally, Meng Hao sped back, entered the Nine Seas God World, and began to slaughter the Demonic Cultivator Horde!

Instantly, the two Demonic Dao Realm cultivators rose to their feet. But then, Ling Yunzi stood, laughing as he blocked their path.

“We’re all members of the same sect,” he said with smile. “We shouldn’t involve ourselves in the matters of the Junior generation. I hope the three of you can understand that. Why don’t we all discuss the Dao to pass the time? We don’t get opportunities to get together like this very often.”

“Get the hell out of my way!” said the red-haired Demonic cultivator, his voice echoing like thunder. He was just about to charge past, when Ling Yunzi snorted coldly.

“We have an agreement, don’t we?” he said. “Could it be that you’re actually going to break your word?”

The faces of the two Demonic Dao Realm experts flickered.

It was at this point that Godmaster suddenly moved noiselessly to appear next to Ling Yunzi. He looked darkly at the two Demonic Dao Realm experts and coldly said, “Meng Hao is connected by destiny to the Nine Seas God World! You can’t blame me for killing you if you step out of that door!”

Off to the side, the two human Dao Realm experts were just about to walk out when Granny Nine appeared in front of them, smiling.

“Fellow Daoists, I’ve experienced some enlightenment recently regarding water magic. Come, come. Let’s meditate and appreciate it together.” Granny Nine waved her hand, causing a drop of water to fly out. It did not glitter resplendently, and was clearly just ordinary water. Obviously Granny Nine wasn’t interested in even bothering with pretenses.

The two human Dao Realm experts looked extremely irritated, and were about to say something in response when Granny Nine’s eyes suddenly flashed dangerously.

“Have you two forgotten our agreement? Besides, are you really going to be so insulting as to refuse to discuss the Dao with me?”

Chapter 1071: Living Shield!

Meng Hao sped through the Nine Seas God World. He didn't lift a finger against the human cultivators, but he massacred the Demonic cultivators. Although he didn't necessarily recognize each and every one of them, overall, he knew who they were.

After all, in the short time he had been in the Nine Seas God World, every time he saw Demonic cultivators, they looked back at him with roiling killing intent. To him, it seemed as if the Demonic cultivators would instantly try to kill him if given the chance.

That was actually true. If it wasn't for Ling Yunzi and the rest of his faction exerting pressure on the Demonic Cultivator Horde, any of its members would try to kill Meng Hao the instant they saw him!

It was a type of enmity that, in truth... could not be deemed as being in the wrong. And as for Meng Hao's massacre of them in return... that was also impossible to judge as either correct or incorrect.

The crux of the matter was that they had different perspectives. Meng Hao knew that, and as such, he had originally chosen to avoid open conflict, even if they momentarily bared their fangs at him. That was all before they violated the biggest taboo in the world of cultivation.

Furthermore, he had spent most of his time in his Immortal's cave, and any time he had emerged, he had simply ignored the murderous glares of the Demonic cultivators. He had done nothing to provoke them, and had actually felt a bit sorry about what had caused the whole situation. He even felt a bit irritated that the whole situation was beyond his control.

After all, what had happened back in the Milky Way Sea was fundamentally caused by the Resurrection Lily.

However, holding back had resulted in placing Chu Yuyan at death's door, and had also put Chen Fan and Fatty in a position to be similarly harmed. That was something Meng Hao could not ignore!

Since he couldn't ignore it, then decided that he might as well attack

with deadly force!

Since he decided to kill... then he would make a shocking display. He would turn the matter into a bloody lesson that would be firmly imprinted on the hearts of the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

Before, he had used words to send a clear message to them: Don't provoke me!

Now, he would use actions to tell them: Don't provoke me!

DIE!

He waved his hand, and the long bone-tip spear appeared. With a sweeping motion, he caused a handful of incoming Demonic cultivators to explode into bits. They were killed in body and spirit, transformed into a cloud of blood. The reek of blood began to spread about as Meng Hao slaughtered his way forward like a deity of death!

Numerous human cultivators kept their distance, watching in shock, but doing nothing to interfere or to try to stop Meng Hao.

Currently, no Ancient Realm cultivators with five or more extinguished Soul Lamps were showing their faces in the Nine Seas God World. Virtually all of the Demonic cultivators Meng Hao ran into were in the Immortal Realm. Only a few Ancient Realm opponents appeared, all of whom had only two or three extinguished Soul Lamps.

To Meng Hao, these people were nothing more than... dry weeds to be crushed underfoot!

He waved his hand, causing the Blood Demon Grand Magic to appear. Rumbling could be heard as 123 Blood Demon heads formed. They transformed into a blood-red tempest that spread out in all directions.

Miserable shrieks and cries of astonishment echoed out into the air.

As he proceeded forward, nine beams of golden light suddenly closed in on him. They were all Ancient Realm Demonic cultivators with two or three extinguished Soul Lamps, arranged in a spell formation.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered when he noticed that one of the nine

attacking Demonic cultivators was a Sea Dragon. With a cold snort, he waved his finger, causing hundreds of thousands of mountains to rumble down. Everything shook, and a huge wind kicked up as the nine Demonic cultivators were crushed, sending blood spurting out in all directions. Their faces filled with astonishment as Meng Hao suddenly utilized the Star Plucking Magic.

The Sea Dragon Demonic Cultivator suddenly flew through the air to be snatched by Meng Hao, who then clenched his hand viciously, causing the Demonic cultivator to revert to its true form, a roaring 300 meter Sea Dragon. Then, all of the onlookers looked on as Meng Hao efficiently slashed his hand into the Sea Dragon's chest.

A miserable scream could be heard from the Sea Dragon. Meng Hao's expression was placid as he shoved his hand deeper in and grabbed onto the Sea Dragon's heart. Then he clenched his hand down viciously, causing the heart to explode. Heart-blood fused with the Sea Dragon's soul and life force, transforming into a drop of white blood!

Then Meng Hao pulled his hand back out and put the drop of blood into his bag of holding.

"One down!"

When the crowds saw this happening, and the intense murderous aura that surged up from Meng Hao, the viciousness and coldness caused their minds to spin.

It was at this point that Meng Hao extended his hand to reveal the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced as he vanished. Almost in the same moment, a pillar of light slammed down toward the position he had just occupied.

A Demonic cultivator then appeared in that same spot. Before it could even react, it was completely vaporized by the beam of light.

Meng Hao reappeared off in the distance, eyes flickering as he looked around at several hundred Demonic cultivators who had flown together to form a huge spell formation. Shockingly, their combined forms created a 3,000-meter long sea beast, a gigantic sea crab!

The sea crab spell formation looked extremely strange. In addition to its two huge pincers, there were eight Sea Dragons growing out of its illusory carapace. All of them were roaring at Meng Hao, causing beams of magical light to fly out toward him.

Meng Hao blinked nine times in a row, causing his view of the world to change. He could now clearly see that of the more than 1,000 Demonic cultivators that made up the sea crab spell formation, there were eight that made up the nucleus. Those eight were all Sea Dragon cultivators.

“If I add those in, I’ll only be short one Long Tianhai!” Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes.

The sea crab roared, and two beams of light flew out of its pincers, piercing down into the ground and then erupting out from below his feet.

Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph. He was now fairly close to Long Tianhai’s Immortal’s cave. Eyeing the sea crab for a moment, he suddenly began to switch locations with random Demonic cultivators, causing him to get closer and closer.

As he closed in, his cultivation base surged higher. His goal was to reach the giant sea crab and then strike like lightning, destroying it in one shot.

He picked up speed, and his momentum built up, but just when he was about to reach the sea crab, a bellowing roar could be heard in front of him, and a black beam of light suddenly appeared. It was like a tornado spinning toward him, which then transformed into a burly man. He looked exactly like a cultivator, except that... he had a huge turtle shell on his back! The turtle shell looked crystalline, and glittered resplendently, making the burly man look impressively powerful.

“DIE!” he roared. Surprisingly, the man did not emanate any cultivation base fluctuations. However, when he struck out with his fist, it contained Heaven-shaking, Earth shattering power.

“The Life-Extermination Fist!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes widening as he recognized the fist strike.

“A body cultivator!”

As it turned out, the burly man... was a body cultivator. He was a Demonic cultivator, and yet, he did not cultivate the path to Immortal Ascension. Instead... he pursued fleshly body Immortal Seeking. His name was also on the ninth golden gate stone stele, and although he wasn't ranked as high as Meng Hao, he was still in the top 10.

At the same time that he attacked with astonishing power, all of a sudden, a huge wave appeared off in the distance, surging toward Meng Hao along with a cold snort which emanated from within.

The voice belonged to a woman, and was filled with power that could split metal and shatter stone. Even more shocking was that the snort itself was filled with an unbelievably powerful divine sense that sent intense pain stabbing into Meng Hao's brain. His entire body was shaken, and he stopped in place.

The burly Demonic cultivator took advantage of that moment to slam his fist into Meng Hao, who let out a muffled grunt as he fell back seven or eight paces.

However, the burly Demonic cultivator's face fell, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he staggered backward a few dozen steps. He was completely astonished to find that his blow had actually ended up injuring himself!

The backlash power that came from Meng Hao caused the burly man's scalp to go numb.

Meng Hao slowly looked up, eyes cold as he sized up the incoming wave. His eyes were immediately drawn to a woman sitting cross-legged inside of it. She wore a blue dress, and was incredibly beautiful, although cold, with a murderous aura.

Meng Hao was unfamiliar with this woman.

All of a sudden, another cold voice rang out. Fan Dong'er appeared, inky hair swirling around her as she planted herself directly in the path of the wave.

"Sea Daughter Bei Yu, I shall be your opponent this day!"

The woman within the wave was none other than... the Holy Daughter of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, the equally famous... Sea Daughter Bei Yu!

1

Bei Yu frowned as Fan Dong'er appeared in front of her. The two women faced off in midair for a moment and then began to fight. Meng Hao looked away from them, and as he did, the burly body cultivator up ahead bellowed,

The burly man clenched his fists and declared, "You're also a body cultivator! Do you have the guts to fight me with no magical techniques? Let's have a fleshly body duel!!"

In response to the burly body cultivator's challenge, Meng Hao snorted coldly and began to stride forward, his qi and blood power rocketing up. At the same time, the burly man roared and began to run forward, his own qi and blood surging. As they closed in on each other, a crafty gleam suddenly appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. Just when they were about to slam into each other, his fist suddenly transformed into an incantation gesture, and the Paragon Bridge appeared to meet the burly man's Life-Extermination Fist.

At the same time, the burly man's left hand began to glow with a flickering light, which transformed into a Ghost Face. However, because of Meng Hao's quick switch to summon the Paragon Bridge and its intense pressure, the Ghost Face gave a shriek and vanished.

That Ghost Face was an attack that could be used to limit the qi and blood of a body cultivator, and was the body cultivator's trump card. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would actually rely on a magical technique and not his fleshly body!

The Life-Extermination Fist of the old man in the ninth golden gate stone stele could easily rock the Paragon Bridge. However, this Demonic body cultivator was not nearly as qualified. Rumbling could be heard, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. His fist exploded, and he tumbled backward shrieking. At the same time, Meng Hao didn't slow down for a moment, but rather, shot after him.

“Despicable!” raged the burly man. “You’re a body cultivator, but you don’t have the guts to fight me with body cultivation!?!?”

“You think that I won’t use magical techniques just because you say so, smart-ass? Besides, you tried to pull a fast one too!” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered icily as his right hand shot out and performed an incantation gesture, then transformed into a fist. The fist struck out like lightning toward the man’s chest. In the moment before it struck, it transformed again, this time into a palm, which smashed into the man’s chest and grabbed him. Blood sprayed out of the man’s mouth as Meng Hao then lifted him directly up in front of him.

Shockingly, he was using the burly man as a shield with which to charge the giant sea crab!

*

Note from Deathblade: The following note is from Er Gen. P.S. he lives in Mudangjiang prefecture in Heilongjiang province.

Note from Er Gen: I’m so depressed today. My wife and daughter went traveling in Harbin and left me home all alone. What to do...? What a headache! Are there any Fellow Daoists in Mudanjiang who want to go get a bite to eat?

*

1. Bei Yu’s name in Chinese is 贝玉 bèi yù. Bei means “shell”. Yu means “jade”.

Chapter 1072: The Disgrace of the Body Cultivation World!

The burly Demonic cultivator was virtually scared witless. After having been captured by Meng Hao, he was somehow rendered completely powerless, and then placed firmly in front of Meng Hao as he charged the gigantic sea crab.

Without even thinking about it, the man began to curse: “Have you no face at all!? You’re the disgrace of the body cultivation world! You’re shameless!!”

Meng Hao ignored him completely, and in fact began to charge forward even faster. The eight Sea Dragons growing out of the sea crab’s back roared as they unleashed countless magical techniques. However, all he had to do in response was wave the burly Demonic cultivator, using him as a shield to block all of the magical techniques.

Miserable shrieks could be heard. The burly man trembled, and his back was already lacerated and bleeding. He stared at Meng Hao, terrified, and continued to curse:

“You’re gonna die a horrible death! Dammit! There’s nobody more shameless than you!!

“Fudge! What did I ever do to you, huh? I declared a fair and open duel with you and then you tried to pull a fast one on me! That wasn’t a magical technique that I used, it was a reminder to you that it’s improper for us body cultivators to use magic!”

It was at that point that Meng Hao shifted the burly Demonic cultivator’s position to intercept a beam of light that then slammed into the man’s back. He let out a miserable shriek, and a tremor ran through him as blood spurted out from wounds all over his body.

“I beg of you! Release me! I really can’t handle this....” the burly man wailed. The fact that this was the first Demonic cultivator he had come across that immediately resorted to begging caused Meng Hao to stare in

shock.

“Request denied,” Meng Hao replied, shaking his head. He simply wasn’t willing to part with such an excellent living shield. Tightening his grip on the burly man, he charged forward. As he closed in on the sea crab, divine abilities and magical techniques glittered in the form of numerous pillars of light that then merged together in a vicious attack.

Instantly, the entire battlefield was filled with the miserable cries of the burly Demonic cultivator. He had never experienced such intolerable pain. The sense of grave crisis that filled him left him convinced that if things kept going on this way, he would be killed.

“Please, I beg you, don’t be like this! Look, we’re both body cultivators, obviously we’re connected by destiny! Let me go, okay!? I guarantee that I’ll leave immediately. I promise....” As the body cultivator spoke, his voice grew weaker and weaker. The flame of his life force was clearly growing dim, as if he were about to die.

Meng Hao stared in shock yet again. He was sure that the man couldn’t possibly be this weak. Although he might be heading toward death, he was still quite a bit away. In fact, he was far enough away from dying that Meng Hao was fairly certain he would hold out until he could reach the sea crab.

His body flickered as he dodged a magical technique, resulting in him getting slightly closer to the burly Demonic cultivator. Suddenly, the burly man lifted his head up, opened his mouth wide, and chomped out viciously toward Meng Hao’s neck.

Meng Hao twisted his hand, and the burly man screamed as Meng Hao twisted his neck to the point of breaking. A loud snapping sound could be heard as the man’s teeth chomped down onto thin air. Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed coldly as he swung the man around to absorb another round of magical techniques, before finally appearing in front of the sea crab. Then, he brandished the burly man like a weapon, using him to physically strike the sea crab.

A boom could be heard, and the sea crab shuddered. The burly Demonic

cultivator screamed. In his mind, his body was on the verge of collapsing, and his soul was about to be shattered.

“I can’t handle it!” the man blurted out. “I implore you, I... I can even help you fight! Just give me some medicinal pills to recover, and then I can use my powerful frame to block even more magical techniques for you!”

Even as the words left his mouth, Meng Hao swung him again, slamming him into the sea crab. Boundless light shone off of the crab as countless divine abilities were unleashed. Meng Hao immediately lifted the burly man overhead to block them.

Simultaneously, one of the sea crab’s pincers whistled down in attack. Meng Hao just managed to avoid it, when the other pincer shot toward him.

Before Meng Hao could do anything, the burly body cultivator screamed miserably. He seemed to be more nervous than Meng Hao about everything that was happening.

“NO!!” He quickly bit his tongue and spit out some blood, which transformed into a blood shield that looked very much like the crystalline shell on his back. At the same time, the shell on his back expanded, covering his entire body.

Just as he finished doing these things, Meng Hao finished swinging him around to defend against the second pincer attack, which snapped down onto the burly man.

A boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of the burly man’s mouth. He screamed, but it was weaker than before, almost as if he didn’t have the breath to cry out.

“Save me...” he wept, “is there anyone... who can save me...? I... I’m still worth something....”

As soon as he heard the words, Meng Hao realized that they made sense. The burly man hadn’t outlived his usefulness. He quickly waved his hand, causing several medicinal pills to fly out and enter the burly man’s mouth. As soon as they melted, the man’s body quivered.

In that moment in which hope shone in his heart, Meng Hao took a deep breath and then summoned all of the boundless qi and blood power he could summon. A huge wind kicked up as massive power rose up inside of him.

The burly Demonic cultivator started in shock, and then started screaming as Meng Hao lifted him high into the air. Then, Meng Hao used all the power he could muster to fling the burly man viciously toward the sea crab!

“Meng Hao, you Heaven-damned bastard! You’re shameless! You’re the disgrace of the body cultivation world! You deserve a horrible death!!” The burly man screamed as he turned into a shooting star. The power of his own body combined with Meng Hao’s power made him look like a long spear as he shot through the air and slammed into the sea crab.

If that were all there were to it, it probably wouldn’t have counted as Meng Hao being very shameless. But next, Meng Hao shot along behind the burly man, hiding behind him as they headed toward the sea crab.

In the blink of an eye, the man was directly in front of the crab’s head. Glittering light shone, as if there were a shield in place, and yet it shattered, and the burly man pierced into the sea crab’s body.

The spell formation that made up the sea crab shook as if it were destabilizing. Furthermore, Meng Hao followed the man as he stabbed into the sea crab. Electricity crackled around Meng Hao as he began switching places with and slaughtering the Demonic cultivators around him.

Cries of panic rang out from inside the sea crab. In the space of only about ten breaths, booms rang out, and the gigantic sea crab was more than half destroyed. Then, it exploded.

Hundreds of Demonic cultivators flew out, killing intent raging. They didn’t retreat, but instead, charged Meng Hao. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered coldly, and he gave a cold snort as he waved his hand, causing Blood Demon heads to materialize and start slaughtering the Demonic cultivators.

Booms rang out, and blood rained down out of the sky.

Every time Meng Hao switched positions with the Lightning Cauldron, more Demonic cultivators would die. Their miserable shrieks of death gradually blended together into a cacophony that caused each and every one of the Demonic cultivators to begin trembling, no matter how enraged they were.

The eight Sea Dragon Demonic cultivators were the main targets in this assault. He managed to get his hands on one, then two, then three... He was like a deity of slaughter, and anyone who faced him was smashed as easily as rotting wood.

Finally, his right hand snaked out to latch onto the seventh Sea Dragon. He ripped its chest open and crushed its heart, then turned and looked over at the burly Demonic cultivator.

The man was severely injured, but he looked as maddened as ever. His eyes seemed to lack any fear of death, as if it didn't matter how powerful the opponent he faced was, he would still want to fight. Even if his body was crushed into a pulp, he would still fight!

"Kill him! We Demonic cultivators can be beheaded, and we can give up our lives, but we must kill him!

"Kill him! Brothers, rise up! Kill this man!!"

His enraged roaring rose up above the other shouts echoing out from among the crowds of Demonic cultivators as he ran along. He seemed to be on the verge of attacking Meng Hao, who snorted coldly and prepared to counterattack, but then suddenly gaped.

It was not very often that Meng Hao was shocked into motionlessness on the battlefield. However, as of this moment, he really was dumbfounded, and almost couldn't believe his eyes as he stared at the burly body cultivator.

The man continued to scream threats about being unafraid of death, and yet... he was actually not charging into battle. Instead, he was backing up.... Although he looked like he was running forward and he cried out

loudly to attack, he actually started retreating at top speed....

It was something that, if you didn't look for closely, you wouldn't even notice....

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face. This shameless fellow was a character that, based on Meng Hao's experiences, was on the same level as the parrot and meat jelly.

He gave a meaningful look to the burly man, then looked away and waved his hand to summon hundreds of thousands of mountains. The sun and moon also appeared, exploding out with massive attacking power, killing anything they touched.

At long last, the Demonic cultivators started to show fear.

It was hard to say which among their trembling number was the first to flee. However, in almost a single moment, all of the Demonic cultivators dispersed in chaotic flight. The burly Demonic cultivator was among them. Although he continued to cry out furiously, he was actually running away faster than anyone else.

The expressions on the faces of the Demonic cultivators were no longer that of hatred, but rather, terror and despair.

"Patriarch, save me!!"

"Where are you, Patriarch! Where are the Ancient Realm Elders!?!?"

"The Demonic Cultivator Horde is facing catastrophe!!!"

"Why!? Why are we being slaughtered inside of our own sect!?!? Oh Patriarch, where are you!?!?"

The voices rang out, filled with grief and sorrow. The Demonic cultivators off in the distance were trembling, and didn't dare to get any closer. The ground was awash with blood and gore.

It was the blood of Demonic cultivators, representing their souls, and their hopelessness.

Almost as soon as the cries began to ring out, the final Sea Dragon could be seen speeding along among the hundreds of other Demonic cultivators.

“Dammit, this Meng Hao has something against us Sea Dragons!!” The fate of all the other Sea Dragons left him terrified and trembling as he fled. However, Meng Hao quickly teleported to his side, and then reached out. A bloody glow could be seen, and the Sea Dragon cultivator screamed as his body was ripped open. His heart flew out and was crushed by Meng Hao. When the white blood appeared, he packed it away, then turned and looked down toward three mountains which could be seen down below.

“Long Tianhai, are you gonna come out? Or am I gonna have to tear that mountain open to get you!?” When he spoke, his voice echoed like thunder.

The center mountain down below had an Immortal’s cave, within which, Long Tianhai sat trembling, terrified out of his mind.

Chapter 1073: Allheaven Immortal!

As Meng Hao's words rang out, he advanced toward the middle mountain peak. In the blink of an eye, he was upon it, and yet, the glittering light of a shield suddenly sprang up to block his way.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he clenched his hand into a fist and punched the shield, causing it to ripple.

In that exact moment, Long Tianhai sat in his Immortal's cave, a jade slip clutched in his hand. From the moment Meng Hao had begun to slaughter his way through the sect, he had been transmitting messages into the jade slip.

"Patriarch, where are you!?!?"

Unfortunately, there was no response at all from the jade slip.

Meng Hao was killing Demonic cultivators left and right. He destroyed the sea crab spell formation, causing blood to rain out of the sky, and terrifying the surrounding Demonic cultivators to the point where they wouldn't even get close to him. As for Long Tianhai, he had fallen into a state of despair.

He looked up at Meng Hao outside of his Immortal's cave, and his bloodshot eyes gleamed with madness. Finally, he gritted his teeth and crushed the jade slip.

"Wanna kill me? It's not gonna be that easy!" A flame of madness flickered in Long Tianhai's eyes. He was a cautious person by nature, and was by no means unprepared. During his fight with Meng Hao outside of the sect's gate, he had sensed how terrifying Meng Hao was, and had instantly begun to make last-minute preparations, just in case.

However, Meng Hao had shown up too soon. Everything happened in a matter of hours, which was too short of a time to complete all of his preparations. As of now, he would just have to risk using what he had on hand.

"Meng Hao, even if I, Long Tianhai, end up dying, well... I'll take you out

with me!" With that, he extended both hands and pushed them down onto the ground. Immediately, the entire Immortal's cave shone with brilliant light, which swirled around and covered the entire mountain.

The light spread out from the central mountain to cover the other two mountain peaks as well. Next, the other two mountains began to tremble violently, and then suddenly collapsed. Countless rocks and dirt fell down, and a cloud of dust spread out as two huge Stone Golems emerged.

They roared loudly as they charged toward Meng Hao to block his way.

Astonishing ripples spread out from the enormous Stone Golems; shockingly, they were similar to Ancient Realm cultivators with three extinguished Soul Lamps.

In the blink of an eye, the two gigantic Stone Golems had clenched their hands into fists and punched out toward Meng Hao, causing a huge wind to spring up. Up in midair, Meng Hao let out a cold snort, then performed an incantation gesture, causing a tempest to spring forth from his hand. He waved a finger, and the tempest rapidly grew to a size of 300 meters, and then shot toward the Stone Golems.

When they slammed together, a boom rang out. The windstorm vanished, and the two Stone Golems shuddered and then collapsed, sending countless chunks of rock tumbling to the ground.

However, almost as soon as the Stone Golems collapsed, the rocks flew back up and reshaped into their original form. This time, however, their cultivation bases were not that of three extinguished soul lamps, but rather, five!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, then he pinched his fingers together in front of him. All of the light in the area surged together in the palm of his hand, where it formed into the shocking image of a sun. The sun floated above his hand, sucking in all the other light within the Nine Seas God World, causing the air around Meng Hao to twist and distort.

His cultivation base rocketed up, and his 123 Immortal meridians merged together. 33 Heavens appeared, and at the same time, a violet moon materialized next to the sun.

The sun and moon began to orbit each other as the Ninth Mountain appeared. The scene was completely dazzling as Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the sun and the moon to slam into each other and explode in a massive attack that swept out in all directions.

Rumbling could be heard, along with cracking sounds from the Stone Golems. Meng Hao strode forward, and the bone-tip spear appeared in his hands. He flung it out violently, causing it to fly through the air in a beam of light. It stabbed through both Stone Golems, causing them to tremble violently and then explode. At the same time, the spear stabbed into the shield surrounding the central mountain.

The shield distorted as if were about to fall apart.

Inside the Immortal's cave, Long Tianhai coughed up blood, and his body withered slightly. He then let out a miserable shriek as his body transformed into a 300-meter Sea Dragon, pitch black like a Black Dragon!

Especially noteworthy was the shocking white scale that could be seen on his forehead. Apparently, that scale indicated that he had a very high position, even among the Sea Dragon Horde.

He had to pay a heavy price of life force to materialize his true form!

"God World Grand Spell Formation! All plants and vegetation, all mountains and stones, become the spirit of the spell formation! I sacrifice my dragon's blood to the spell formation! Activate!" Long Tianhai roared as massive amounts of life force drained out of him, and he visibly withered up. However, the collapsed Stone Golems outside of his Immortal's cave... suddenly formed back together and rose to their feet.

Now... the aura of seven or eight extinguished Soul Lamps erupted out of them.

Meng Hao's eyes widened. He was aware that Long Tianhai was cautious by nature, but he had never imagined that he would be this well prepared. Obviously, he had set up this spell formation in advance, just in case Meng Hao ended up coming here!

“So, he’s borrowing the power of the Nine Seas God World’s protective grand spell formation...?” He looked down thoughtfully at the two Stone Golems, and could tell that they were somehow linked to the Nine Seas God World.

“However, he can’t sustain them for very long. At the most... the time it takes half an incense stick to burn!” He backed up, and was about to make his way off into the distance, when all of a sudden, his mind trembled.

Ling Yunzi’s voice suddenly spoke into his ear.

“If you want to kill him, you’d better hurry up. We can’t delay them any longer.”

At the same time that the voice spoke into his ear, an enraged roar could be heard that caused everything to shake. The sound of it caused everyone to tremble; this was clearly... the voice of a Dao Realm expert.

The crowd instantly responded.

“The Patriarch!!”

“The Patriarch is coming!!”

Back in the Immortal’s cave, Long Tianhai’s eyes shone with wild joy as he sensed that the voice behind the roar was none other than the Dao Realm Patriarch of the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

It was a critical moment. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with determination, and he took a deep breath. He could also tell that the roar came from none other than the Demonic Dao Realm Patriarch, who was currently speeding toward this very location. Although Ling Yunzi and the others had been able to delay him, unfortunately... Meng Hao wouldn’t even have the time it takes for half an incense stick to burn to finish the fight.

He thought for a moment, then extended his hand, within which appeared a Nirvana Fruit.

“If that’s how it is, then I have only one option,” he said softly. He hadn’t even resorted to using the Nirvana Fruit in his battle with Elder Hai Sheng. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to use it, rather, the power drain he would

experience because of it would render him incapable of fighting after a relatively short period of time.

However, if the Demonic Cultivator Horde's Dao Realm expert was coming, then that meant that Ling Yunzi and the others would be too. That meant that right now was a good opportunity to use the Nirvana Fruit.

"Exactly how powerful... is an Allheaven Immortal?" He suddenly very much anticipated what was about to happen. Without another moment's hesitation, he quickly pushed the Nirvana Fruit down onto his forehead.

The first thing he experienced was intense pain. It exploded out into his body, and even though he was tough, he still couldn't help but throw his head back and howl. It was a hoarse howl that was accompanied by an explosive rise in cultivation base!

Rumbling filled the air, and everything shook. The wind screamed around Meng Hao, sweeping across everything, crushing everything down as a huge pressure began to weigh down on the Nine Seas God World!

Meng Hao trembled, and blood spurted out all over his body. His energy began to shoot upward, past the Immortal Emperor Realm and into another terrifying level.

It didn't stop, it just kept going higher and higher. He began to grow taller and bigger as both his fleshly body and his cultivation base rapidly grew more powerful!

Considering he didn't know how long he could maintain this state, he didn't wait for the growth to complete. He advanced, taking a single step that placed him in front of one of the Stone Golems. The Stone Golem roared and punched toward him, but all Meng Hao did was raise his hand and tap it.

That single finger motion caused a huge boom to echo out as the fist suddenly exploded. A moment later, the Stone Golem shattered into pieces and exploded as well.

There was more to it than that, though. Meng Hao's simple finger attack

seemed to erupt with a unique power that covered over the rubble of the Stone Golem, and... severed its connection to natural law!

The Stone Golem was forcibly scraped out from within the power of the Nine Seas God World spell formation. It was a domineering act that caused the entire protective grand spell formation to tremble, and not even dare to resist.

This was only the first step and a single wave of a finger, but it left everyone flabbergasted. Even the incoming Dao Realm experts were shaken.

Then, Meng Hao took a second step, and tapped a second time. The second Stone Golem collapsed in exactly the same fashion as the first. It didn't even qualify to transform into rubble; it was shattered into dust! Meng Hao had no need to sever it from natural law, instead... he completely wiped it away from the Nine Seas God World!

Meng Hao hovered there, energy surging, screaming wind causing his hair and robes to whip wildly. It was as if he could stare down the entire world; the domineering air that he exuded only continued to rise.

Next, he stepped forward a third time, which caused the central mountain's shield to shatter, as if it feared him and didn't even dare to try to block his way. Next... even before he completed his third step, the mountain collapsed. Rock fragments flew out in all directions, revealing Long Tianhai there in the Immortal's cave, coughing up blood, body withered, expression that of despair.

"Patriarch, save me!!" he howled with the last dregs of strength that he could scrape from his life force. Long Tianhai's true form was that of a 300-meter Sea Dragon, but he was now so weak that he looked like a bag of bones.

Meng Hao completed his third step and appeared directly in front of Long Tianhai. Meng Hao was currently about thirty meters tall. He looked like an Immortal Divinity as he stretched out his hand... and clasped Long Tianhai's neck.

It didn't matter how Long Tianhai struggled. Meng Hao's vice-like grip

was something that could ignore all divine abilities, magical techniques, and even natural laws. When he wanted to grab ahold of something... it would be grabbed ahold of!

“How dare you, Junior!” An enraged roar threatened to shatter the world. It exploded in Meng Hao’s ears, causing him to stagger backward. At the same time, the Nirvana Fruit appeared on his forehead, and his cultivation base began to sink back down. Without the slightest hesitation, he sealed Long Tianhai and threw him into his bag of holding. Then, face pale, he reached his hand out to grab the Nirvana Fruit.

He did not pass out like last time. He still had a bit of energy left, allowing him to prop himself up on a nearby rock. He quickly took out some medicinal pills which he began to consume. Then, a bashful expression appeared on his face, and he looked up into the sky.

“Oh, I don’t dare, Senior!”

Chapter 1074: Tongue As Sharp As a Sword

“How dare you, Junior!”

“Oh, I don’t dare, Senior!”

This strange interchange of words echoed about in all directions....

Up in midair was an old man wearing a crimson robe, whose hair was just as red as his clothing. There was no scale on his forehead, nor a horn. However, based on his aura, it was clear that among the powerful experts, he was one who could supersede the will of Heaven and Earth, and virtually burst with the aura of a Demonic cultivator.

This was... the Demonic Cultivator Horde’s Dao Realm Patriarch!

His arrival caused all of the nearby Demonic cultivators to tremble inwardly. It was as if they finally had someone to depend on, as if they were children who, after being bullied, saw their parents suddenly show up on the scene. Actually, in terms of seniority, the Dao Realm Patriarch really was like their parent.

However... neither they, nor the Dao Realm Patriarch who swept down furiously and was prepared to snatch up Meng Hao in a single swipe, could ever have imagined that he would respond in such a way.

From the perspective of the Demonic cultivators, it would make the most sense for Meng Hao to respond in an even more unyielding fashion. How could they have ever predicted that he would say what he did just now...?

Meng Hao’s voice was soft, even weak, causing strange expressions to appear on the onlookers’ faces. Even the ordinary cultivators of the Nine Seas God World were the same.

The only person who had a different reaction was Fan Dong’er, who suddenly stopped fighting with Sea Daughter Bei Yu, and quickly backed up. As soon as she saw the expression on Meng Hao’s face, her heart

began to prickle, and she remembered how he had the exact same look on his face when they had made their bet earlier.

“Meng Hao, you rogue,” she thought, “you definitely have some evil plan up your sleeve.” Fan Dong’er was absolutely certain of this.

The descending Dao Realm Patriarch stared in shock for a moment, then continued to wave his hand, which seemed to interfere with natural law, and materialize a gigantic, illusory hand, which snatched toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao did nothing to dodge, and simply allowed the hand to grab toward him. Suddenly, a cold snort rang out from Meng Hao’s side. Granny Nine appeared, stepped forward, and tapped the gigantic hand.

No noise could be heard, but two natural laws seemed to have collided, and massive roaring sounds echoed out in the minds of all present.

The huge hand collapsed, and the Demonic Dao Realm expert gave a muffled grunt. Granny Nine’s face drained of blood, and she looked up with a cold gleam in her eyes.

“Enough,” she said. “Your Demonic Cultivator Horde has raised enough of a racket already. Aren’t you finished yet?” Suddenly, she made a grasping motion, causing a dragon-head cane to appear in her hand. She tapped it down onto the ground, and rumbling sounds could be heard as Essence power erupted out, with Granny Nine at the center.

Simultaneously, Ling Yunzi materialized, and Godmaster stepped out of thin air. Another Demonic Dao Realm expert appeared, as did the other two Dao Realm experts, the man and the woman.

The appearance of all these mighty Patriarchs instantly caused the rest of the disciples of the Nine Seas God World to prostrate themselves on hands and knees, hearts pounding.

Meng Hao was the only one who remained standing, leaning up against the stone cliff face.

“We had an agreement,” growled the red-haired Dao Realm Patriarch. “Therefore, regarding the things that happened outside of the sect, my

Demonic Cultivator Horde was in the wrong. I'll provide an explanation about that later. We will also do everything in our power to assist in the opening of the Windswept Realm. We will even accept the burden of all the resources necessary!" The red-haired Demonic Dao Realm expert then turned to look at Meng Hao.

"However, this boy slaughtered disciples of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, and inside the sect at that! There WILL be an accounting for this!"

Granny Nine frowned and sighed inwardly. The inner workings of the Nine Seas God World were very complex, with the different factions struggling for supremacy. Sometimes, the only thing that could be done was to sigh. Currently, her eyes flashed coldly, and she was just about to respond, when Meng Hao popped a handful of medicinal pills into his mouth and then cut her off.

"Hey, now, Senior, did you just say that the person who killed the Demonic cultivators out there was ME? Hey! Why the false accusations? I didn't kill them! Really! I didn't. Who saw me do it?" Meng Hao looked very offended as he continued to munch on the medicinal pills, causing his cultivation base to gradually recover. Inwardly, he was smiling coldly. When going all in, sometimes flexibility was necessary. To blindly refuse to be flexible was simply stupid. Meng Hao had his principles, but those principles didn't apply to his enemies.

His words instantly enraged the prostrated Demonic cultivators.

"I saw it with my own eyes! You killed lots of my fellow sect members!!"

"Dammit! Everyone here could see that it was you!"

The Demonic cultivators appeared to be on the verge of going mad, as if they had never seen someone act this shamefully. Meng Hao cleared his throat and spread his hands innocently.

Sighing, he said, "Even if you saw with your own eyes, that doesn't mean much. In any case, it wasn't me who killed them. Maybe the person you saw was simply disguised to look like me? That's most likely what happened. In any case, you need to stop it with these false accusations!" Meng Hao seemed to be getting angry as he explained matters. Even as he

spoke, he continued to pop medicinal pills into his mouth. Off to the side, Granny Nine looked at him with a strange expression, then cleared her throat and prepared to speak.

All of the Dao Realm experts up in midair, including Ling Yunzi and Godmaster, were watching the scene with odd expressions on their faces. As for the red-haired Demonic Dao Realm expert, he was incensed, and before Granny Nine could speak, smiled an icy smile.

“Never before has anyone dared to speak with such insolence to ME!” he said slowly. “You say that you didn’t kill my Demonic cultivators? Well then, let me ask you, whose Immortal’s cave are you in right now? How did you get inside? I personally witnessed you abduct Long Tianhai just now! Could it be that I was hallucinating?” His eyes flickered with killing intent, as he very much wanted to see how Meng Hao would possibly respond to this accusation. If Meng Hao tried to insinuate that he was having hallucinations, then he would quickly discover the consequences of trifling with a Dao Realm expert.

“Oh, THAT,” replied Meng Hao, smiling. He quickly clasped hands and bowed to the Patriarch with a look of extreme sincerity on his face.

“Patriarch, I think we have a bit of a misunderstanding here. Actually, Fellow Daoist Long and I became good friends the instant we met. However, we recently made a bet that had a specific time limit. I just came here today to tell him that I decided to accept the bet!

“Unfortunately, he was in secluded meditation, and I happen to be an impatient person so I let myself in. I kind of damaged his Immortal’s cave in the process. That’s my fault, Senior.” He turned to Granny Nine with an apologetic look and bowed deeply. “Patriarch Granny Nine, I’m willing to pay for all the damages!”

Granny Nine cleared her throat but didn’t say anything in response.

The red-haired old man stared at Meng Hao, and his smile grew even icier.

“If that’s really what happened, then why did you take him captive?!”

“Patriarch, I was worried that he would back out of the bet! But, now that you’re here, I can rest easy. He might try to back out, but the entire Demonic Cultivator Horde won’t back out, right?!”

Inwardly, Meng Hao was chuckling coldly. Just now, the Demonic Patriarch had arrived too quickly, leaving him no time to extract the dragon’s heart, leaving him no other choice than to take Long Tianhai captive. Clearing his throat again, he took out a medicinal pill bottle and poured the contents into his mouth. Everyone looked on with strange expressions.

“Patriarch, if you don’t believe me,” he continued, “you can ask anyone here about the wager between me and Long Tianhai. The bet was about whether or not I could get into the top 100 of the nine golden gate stone steles. If I did, he would represent the Demonic Cultivator Horde to pay me 1,300,000,000 Immortal jades and three Dao weapons!”

Almost immediately, some of the Demonic cultivators in the area who were slow on the uptake began to shout in rage.

“That’s a load of crap! The bet between you and Elder Brother Long was to get into the top 10 of the golden gate stone steles! Also, the stakes were 300,000,000 Immortal jades, not 1,300,000,000, and there weren’t any Dao weapons involved! Also, if you lost, you had to give up your place in the Echelon!!”

In response to this, the red-haired old man’s face darkened. He was well aware of the matter of the bet, but he had never imagined that Meng Hao would bring it up.

Because Meng Hao had been in secluded meditation for a month and not given the nine Sea Realm Demons his response, they had spread word about the matter throughout the entire sect.

The red-haired old man stared coldly at Meng Hao. He was irritated at Meng Hao’s glib use of the tongue, but he had to admit that in terms of taking advantage of the circumstances, he had never seen anybody do so quite so well as Meng Hao.

He was capable of reducing Meng Hao to a bloody paste at any time, and

yet couldn't do so. Meng Hao seemed to be incredibly gifted at using all of the complicated circumstances to tie other people up into knots, even people vastly more powerful than him. Through various means, he checked them in place, ensuring that they couldn't attack.

The old man felt as though he had infinite power that he simply couldn't unleash.

He was unaware, of course, that when Meng Hao entered the cultivation world, he had joined a sect called the Reliance Sect. The theory of that sect was something that Meng Hao had long since imprinted onto his heart.

People should do everything in their power to find someone or something to rely on. Although that wasn't an absolute truth, still... when you were in a situation in which you weren't powerful enough, it made a lot of sense!

"That bet is a personal matter between you and Long Tianhai. If you lose, you have to hand over your Echelon qualifications. Set Long Tianhai free at once!" The red-haired old man seemed to be losing his patience. At this point, Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with a cold light as he stared back at the old man.

"Let's forget Long Tianhai for the moment. Patriarch, Senior, I would like to ask a question of the entire Demonic Cultivator Horde. Are you people even cultivators? Do you know what the biggest taboo among cultivators is?!"

"What exactly is your relationship with us cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea? Do you think that as long as someone isn't a member of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, you can kill them with impunity?!"

"You hate me? Fine, no problem. You can make a move on me, and if I die while fighting back, then nobody will think twice. But, let me ask you, Patriarch, and the rest of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, what is the meaning OF THIS!?" He slapped his bag of holding, causing Chu Yuyan to appear in his arms.

Her face was pale white, and she was clearly unconscious and incredibly weak. It was truly a pitiful sight.

“This is a dear friend from my hometown. She joined the Kunlun Society, and is still a disciple there. However, in order to deal with me, your Demonic Cultivator Horde kidnapped her and brought her here. You put her at death’s door and even poisoned her!

“Fellow Daoists of the Nine Seas God World, if your friends or family were tortured in front of your very eyes, used as a threat against you, would you stand for it!?”

“What is the biggest taboo for cultivators, the most forbidden thing in the cultivation world? It’s THIS!

“If everyone did things like this, then the world of cultivation would be thrown into chaos! I provoked the Demonic cultivators, and they kidnapped and tried to kill my dear friend! What happens if one of you provokes them? They’ll likely do the same thing, won’t they!? It’s a vicious cycle! Fellow cultivators, which of us could ever stand for such a thing!?” Meng Hao’s words echoed out into the ears of all the surrounding cultivators, who seemed to be profoundly moved.

Chapter 1075: The Special Fifth Golden Gate

This was their first time learning about Meng Hao's personal affairs. They all looked at Chu Yuyan and were shaken. Just as Meng Hao had said, if something similar happened to them....

It took only a moment for numerous Nine Seas God World disciples to look coldly at the members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

There were even quite a few Demonic cultivators whose faces flickered; clearly this was their first time learning of the matter as well.

Although things like this happened in the cultivation world, it was something that virtually all cultivators detested. Everyone had family and close friends, as well as enemies. If something like this was overlooked once, then it could very well occur again in the future... to them.

“Demonic Cultivator Horde, you owe ME an accounting! Long Tianhai SHALL die. The Echelon will NOT be taken away from me. And even if I lose the bet, you will still have to give me half of the original stakes in Immortal jade!

“That is MY accounting!” With that, Meng Hao stepped backward a few paces, placing him behind Granny Nine. Enough time had passed that his Eternal stratum had now restored his cultivation base almost to its peak.

The red-haired Patriarch had an extremely unsightly expression on his face. He had actually approved of the tactic of using Chu Yuyan. However, according to the original plan, Meng Hao would have died, and then Chu Yuyan's usefulness would have ended, and the entire matter would have been easily resolved.

Who could ever have imagined that despite the deadly trap they had laid for Meng Hao, he would be able to reverse the situation?

Everything was dead silent. The cultivators of the Nine Seas God World looked around suspiciously at the Demonic Cultivator Horde, having made their own judgment of the situation based on Meng Hao's words.

Most of the Demonic Cultivator Horde maintained silence, although there were some of them who derisively refused to admit fault.

It was at this point that Godmaster's cool voice rang out in all directions: "Let us focus on the most important matters. There is still half a month left to go before the opening of the Windswept Realm.

"Avarice regarding the Echelon was the sowing of Karma. The reaping was everything that happened just now. Fellow Daoists Chi Long and Wu Ling, you may send one additional person into the Windswept Realm upon its opening.

"The matter shall now be dropped. Meng Hao will be allowed to go through with the bet in exactly the way he mentioned. What do the two of you think?" Godmaster looked over at the red-haired old man, and the other Demonic Patriarch.

After a moment of silence, the red-haired old man stared hard at Meng Hao. Meng Hao had already left a deep impression on him, but now, he stared at him as if to affix him permanently in his memory. Finally, he snorted coldly and slowly said, "We'll do things as you say, Godmaster. However... since the Echelon won't be part of the stakes, then if the boy gets into the top ten of all nine golden gate stone steles, then the Demonic Cultivator Horde will give him 300,000,000 Immortal jades. But if he fails, then he won't get a single one!"

He understood that with Granny Nine, Godmaster and Ling Yunzi present, the Demonic Cultivator Horde couldn't afford to cause any major problems. In this skirmish, the Demonic Cultivator Horde had been clearly and utterly defeated.

Furthermore, the defeat had caused the Dao Realm experts from the other two factions, the man and the woman, to have a change in their thinking.

The red-haired old man could now only sigh inwardly. As for the Demonic Patriarch surnamed Wu, he slowly nodded his head.

Godmaster looked over at Meng Hao. Meng Hao's eyes glittered, but he was aware that for the matter to have escalated to this level, meant that

things couldn't be pushed any further. To do so would be counterproductive. Although the rage he felt in his heart would not be so easily dispelled, he still nodded in agreement. However, while everyone was still watching, he pulled Long Tianhai out of his bag of holding.

He gripped him by the neck and squeezed down viciously. Then, his left hand shot out and stabbed into Long Tianhai's chest. Long Tianhai struggled, and as everyone watched, Meng Hao ripped his Sea Dragon heart out of his body.

The heart was still beating as Meng Hao crushed it, producing a white drop of fluid. The onlookers, both ordinary cultivators and Demonic cultivators alike, stared with trembling hearts.

All of a sudden, they were deeply struck by Meng Hao's level of ferocity and brutality.

All of them were musing that, unless absolutely no other options remained, they should never provoke Meng Hao. The cultivators felt that way, and so did the Demonic cultivators, who hated Meng Hao more than ever and yet maintained their silence.

As the red-haired old man watched, his face twitched, and a murderous aura swirled around him. However, there was no way for him to vent his fury. He flicked his sleeve, turned, and left. He knew that if he remained behind, he would eventually lose control of himself.

Meng Hao's face was extremely calm as he retrieved the other nine drops of Sea Dragon heart-blood from his bag of holding. He fused them all together into one larger drop, which he placed into Chu Yuyan's mouth.

Then, he returned her to his bag of holding. Having completed these tasks, he turned and headed toward the golden gate stone steles, eyes flickering coldly.

Although he had killed some Demonic cultivators, that was not sufficient to give vent to the rage he felt in his heart. Perhaps his actions had been sufficient to cow the ordinary Demonic cultivators, but when it came to the Dao Realm experts, if they didn't taste a bit of pain as well

then they might cause him trouble down the line.

As of this moment, his wager with the Demonic Cultivator Horde was like a knife that he could twist into their side. Their Dao Realm experts would definitely feel the pain of losing their wealth!

300,000,000 Immortal jades was a vast sum that would cause anyone to pant with eagerness, even Dao Realm experts. If the Demonic Cultivator Horde lost such a quantity of Immortal jade, it would definitely be a bloody blow to them.

The mere thought of 300,000,000 Immortal jades caused Meng Hao's heart to pound. Panting, his eyes shone with a bright light.

"I'm gonna go all out! I'll definitely get into the top 10 of all the golden gate stone steles!" He took a deep breath and pushed faster. Whistling through the air, he quickly neared the location of the closest golden gate stone stele.

It was the fifth stele, and when Meng Hao looked over at the golden light which shone up from it, he could just barely make out a battlefield of epic proportions, filled with endless, eternal slaughter.

"Fifth golden gate stone stele. Trial by fire of slaughter. Also known as the trial by fire of the Dao heart!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

He stepped forward, and in the blink of an eye, vanished into the stone stele. In that same moment, vast numbers of Nine Seas God World cultivators converged in the area. Although it wouldn't be accurate to say that literally every person in the Nine Seas God World knew about the wager, it wouldn't be too far from the truth. Besides, Meng Hao's massacre, and the way he had stood up to the Demonic Cultivator Horde's Dao Realm Patriarch, had shocked everyone.

When you threw in the astronomical wager, it ensured that it didn't take long before the fifth golden gate stone stele was surrounded by a crowd of people. Even Granny Nine and her group, as well as the Demonic Patriarch surnamed Wu, were all hovering in midair, watching.

"To get in the top 10 in all of the golden gate stone steles... that would be

incredibly difficult!”

“Meng Hao might have gotten to 2nd place in the ninth golden gate stone stele, but the other stone steles are all different. That’s especially true of the first golden gate, which emphasizes pressure!”

Everyone was already discussing the matter. Granny Nine and Ling Yunzi looked at each other, and their eyes glittered for a moment before they focused solely on the fifth stone stele.

The Patriarch from the Demonic Cultivator Horde looked on with a strange gleam in his eyes. “The fifth golden gate stone stele... is unique. A very unusual trial by fire.”

Meanwhile.... Meng Hao appeared within the world of the fifth golden gate stone stele. When he looked around, he saw a bright, beautiful world filled with birdsong and the fragrance of flowers. Spiritual energy swirled about, as if the place were a world for Immortals.

Meng Hao stared for a moment, then looked down at himself. He was wearing an unfamiliar Daoist robe. Furthermore, he was standing amongst a group of people atop a mountain, in a huge public square.

He was surrounded by tens of thousands of cultivators, packed together both on the ground and hovering in midair. A stern and somber air slowly filled the area, causing clouds to obscure the sun.

Up ahead, three figures floated in the air. They were surrounded by radiant golden light, making their features difficult to make out.

An ancient voice echoed out across the square: “Outside clans are invading who wish to destroy our world! Their evil knows no bounds, and they burst with Devilish will! They are fiendish Devils from out among the stars, and in the coming war, you disciples must slay them! The killing will never stop, and yet, there is nowhere for you to retreat to!

“Today, they shall arrive! At the same time... we have discovered that the fiendish Devils have already infiltrated our sect in disguise!” As the voice faded away, the three glowing figures up ahead waved their hands simultaneously.

Immediately, roughly a third of the group of tens of thousands of cultivators suddenly found themselves bathed in bright light. They looked shocked, astonished, as the other cultivators around them began to back up slowly.

Meng Hao noticed that there were two cultivators standing near him who were now bathed in light.

“Patriarch, this.... I’m not a fiendish Devil! I....”

“What’s going on!? Patriarch, I’m a disciple of the sect!”

They were so scared they were trembling, but at the same time, they were angry, as if they were being unjustly accused.

There was only a single response to their pleas.

“Kill them!”

Many among the crowd stood there silently. Although Meng Hao didn’t know any of these people, he did feel a sense of familiarity toward them. Other cultivators in the area were hesitating, and only a few of them chose to actually attack.

“I’m not a fiendish Devil! I’m a sect disciple!!” Miserable shrieks rang out, as many of the disciples fled, and even more began to weep.

“Elder Brother Zhang, I’m not a fiendish Devil!!”

“Elder Sister, I’m Fan Sheng! I’m your Junior Brother....”

As the slaughter began to unfold, Meng Hao frowned. He still wasn’t sure to make of this trial by fire.

All of a sudden, one of the disciples who was bathed in light, a middle-aged man, threw his head back and laughed loudly.

“I, Chen, am no fiendish Devil! I’m a sect disciple! I don’t mind dying this day to prove that! However, I don’t need anyone to spill my blood for me. If I’m going to die! I’ll die with honor!” With that, he smashed his hand down onto the top of his head. A popping sound could be heard, blood sprayed out, and he was dead.

Everyone looked on silently. Soon more anguished laughter rang out as shockingly, more than half of the accused disciples began to end their own lives.

“If I have to die, I won’t die at the hands of my fellow disciples!”

“I might die today, but before I die, I just have to say... that I am no Devil!” Booms rang out constantly, and corpses toppled to the ground. Soon, things began to grow quiet as all of the disciples who had been accused of being fiendish Devils... were dead.

All of the remaining disciples, regardless of whether or not they had attacked moments ago, looked on with complicated expressions. Then, they turned toward the three figures up front, and couldn’t prevent the suspicion from showing on their faces.

Meng Hao felt shaken. For some reason, this trial by fire seemed very strange.

“This isn’t a trial by fire about slaughter. Nor is it about Dao heart. There... is some other purpose to it!” Meng Hao took a deep breath as he realized that the realism of the things he was seeing had caused him to almost forget who he was, and to completely immerse himself in the feeling of being a disciple of this sect.

He realized this because he was also starting to feel suspicious regarding the three figures up in the front.

Chapter 1076: Blind!

Everything was completely and utterly silent. The reek of blood spread out, and the ground was covered in pools of blood.... Dead bodies could be seen everywhere, the corpses of those who had refused be slain by fellow sect disciples, and had instead ended their own lives.

They demonstrated their sincerity by sacrificing their own lives!

Some had fled, but were cut down in the process.

Finally, a sigh could be heard from the mouths of one of the three figures up ahead.

“Elder Brother Li, you are also a fiendish Devil!” Suddenly, two of the three figures joined forces to attack the third. Immediately Essence aura erupted out from all of them.

Shockingly, all three of them were Dao Realm experts.

The third of the group now wore a bitter and complex expression. He offered no explanation, but instead, merely sighed and began to fight. Booms echoed out as he fell back, slowly approaching the crowd of people within which Meng Hao stood.

He looked up at the other two who were attacking him, and sighed again.

“You really think the Devils infiltrated us...? Well, there’s no need for pointless loss. I don’t even have a hundred years of life left anyway, so...

“It doesn’t matter. Regardless of what you people think, if the members of the Junior generation can kill themselves to prove their sincerity, then how could I possibly fear death!?” With that, he glanced back at the crowd of disciples, including Meng Hao, and gave them a meaningful look. It was an expression that said he couldn’t bear to part with them, and at the same time, wished them well. Then he smashed his hand down onto the top of his head.

That strike caused a tremor to run through his body. Boundless Essence aura then erupted out of him.

“I’m willing to die in body and spirit,” he said in his archaic voice. “Let my cultivation base bolster all of the disciples of the sect. Allow them... to fight against the invading enemies! Give them strength!” As he faded away, his aura spread out and merged into the bodies of the disciples.

That included Meng Hao. He felt something warm flowing through him, causing his cultivation base to rise up. In addition, a glowing light rose up around him, almost like some sort of protective shield.

Within that shield, he could feel an archaic will that filled him with regret and kindness.

Everyone stood there, reticent, hearts pounding, their suspicions growing stronger.

“Are there really enemies coming to invade?” That was the question running through all of their minds. Meng Hao couldn’t stop himself from thinking the exact same thing.

The two Dao Realm experts looked at the shields surrounding all of the disciples, and their faces flickered. They exchanged a look, and were about to say something, when all of a sudden rumbling sounds filled the heavens. The clouds collapsed as a huge rift appeared, as if some giant hand were ripping it open. Next, a bloody glow spread out in all directions!

Within the rift, it was possible to see another shocking world. That world was completely red, as if it had experienced countless ages of bloodshed, staining the whole world the same color.

More shocking was that there was a sea visible that was made up entirely of blood.

Even the sky was red. That world instantly left a deep impression on everyone who saw it.

Next, countless figures in long robes whistled through the air out of the rift. Their faces were pale, and their expressions were that of joy. There were even many who were laughing happily as they looked around.

Almost as soon as these people appeared, a voice shouted out in Meng Hao’s ears, and in the ears of all the other cultivators: “Kill them!”

Everyone hesitated for a moment, then flew up into the air toward the cultivators coming out of the rift, and began to slaughter them.

The cultivators from the rift stared in shock, and immediately began to shout out various explanations. However, they could not avoid being cut down.

Meng Hao frowned. For some reason, he got the feeling that these people weren't invading. In fact, many of them seemed to be smiling amiably.

After a moment of hesitation, he attacked, tapping one of the enemy cultivators on the forehead. The man's body collapsed; he seemed to be as weak as a mortal. In the moment before he died, he looked at Meng Hao, shocked.

"We have no evil intentions. We're escaping to this place! Please, let us go...."

Meng Hao frowned and sent his divine sense sweeping out. Instantly, he saw that the people were mostly dodging out of the way and offering explanations. Meng Hao quickly realized that there were even Foundation Establishment cultivators who were only able to make it safely here by means of a teleportation portal.

Furthermore, the strongest among them weren't even attacking. They were just offering anxious explanations, and falling back in retreat. It seemed most of them were actually retreating into the rift, as if to leave this world.

The disciples in the sect army to which Meng Hao belonged began to hesitate. Everyone seemed confused, and even those who were attacking seemed to be forcing themselves. There were only a handful who were resolutely attacking with full viciousness, carrying out mass slaughter.

"Trial by fire of slaughter?" he murmured to himself.

Meng Hao hesitated, falling behind the crowd of attacking cultivators. At that point, a stern, dark voice was transmitted into his ear.

"They're fiendish Devils from out in the starry sky! Why aren't you

killing them!?” The voice echoed like claps of thunder. One of the two Dao Realm Patriarchs appeared next to Meng Hao and stared at him solemnly.

“When you look at them, they seem kind and good. That’s what you think, but if you trust in the sect, you’ll kill them! If you don’t have faith in the sect, then what is the purpose of coming to this trial by fire? If you won’t slaughter for the sect, then get the hell out of here!” The man waved his sleeve, causing a massive power of expulsion to rise up around Meng Hao. It was as if the entire world was about to reject him and eject him out forcibly!

Just in the moment in which Meng Hao was about to be expelled out of the world, the cultivators in the rift suddenly stopped evading. Their kind smiles twisted viciously, and their multi-colored Daoist robes turned as red as blood!

Terrifying auras exploded out from them, and their smiles grew even more ferocious. They now looked completely and utterly different from before. Rumbling could be heard as leathery, blood-colored wings sprouted out of their backs. Now, they truly looked like evil Devils.

“Someone in this world actually knew about our plan.... What a bore! These must be surviving cultivators from one of the other worlds we destroyed!”

“Who cares? Although things might not be as fun, at least... we can still eat them all! That feeling of contentment can make up for some of the lost fun.”

“What a pity, they saw through our plan.” Sinister howls could be heard coming from the mouths of the Devilish cultivators. The ones who had died just now rose back to life and began to attack, causing a brutally evil air to erupt out.

The blood-colored world inside the rift suddenly erupted with blood-red light. Shockingly, countless souls appeared, screaming miserable screams. They seemed endless, and were apparently the souls of the people butchered by the blood-red cultivators.

What caused Meng Hao’s eyes to widen even more, and what filled the

hearts of the hesitating disciples with complete shock, was that... the blood on the battlefield began to congeal together... and transform into more vicious figures.

Shockingly... they were the disciples the sect had identified earlier as being fiendish Devils! Even the ones who had ended their own lives began to rise to their feet, vicious smiles plastered on their faces.

“What a bunch of morons! How boring!”

“We just started having fun and it’s already over! How sad. I never thought that they would realize we were traitors!”

As they rose to their feet, the countless droplets of blood that constituted the remains of the Dao Realm cultivator formed back together. His mouth twisted into a taunting smile, and an intensely powerful aura rose up from him.

“Erupt,” he said. Instantly, Meng Hao and all the other people who had absorbed some of his cultivation base felt their bodies rumbling. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth, and the warm current that had spread through his body turned malignantly poisonous. Immediately, his organs began to rot and decay.

In that moment, the same words rang out in the minds of everyone present.

The sect was right!

The sect said that these people were fiendish Devils, and they were!

The sect said that the Dao Realm Patriarch was a fiendish Devil, and he truly was!

The sect said that enemies were invading, and they really were!

The sect said that the intruders were not kind and good, but rather, fiendish Devils. They... absolutely were fiendish Devils!

Wrong! All of the disciples who hesitated were wrong!

All of this proved without a doubt that the sect had been right in everything!

Now, the slaughter truly began, and booms filled the air.

Meng Hao's mind reeled. Even as he was being expelled from the world, he suddenly raised his hand and waved a finger through the air. Instantly, one of the blood-colored Devilish cultivators coming through the rift exploded.

All of a sudden, the power of expulsion faded away.

The Patriarch surrounded by the glowing light gave Meng Hao a look, then turned away and waded into the fighting.

Meng Hao didn't say anything, but his eyes began to glow brightly. After they flickered a few times, he sighed.

"Have faith in the sect..." he murmured softly. "Well done, Nine Seas God World. In a mere trial by fire, you still manage to plant a seed like this in the hearts of your disciples. The last time I tried out the fifth golden gate trial by fire, it wasn't like this."

In the fifth golden gate stone stele, nothing else was really as important as the key to the entire trial by fire.... The message was: don't trust in your own judgement, put your faith in what the sect tells you.

Were it not for the fact that Meng Hao had corroborated the Dao on his own to achieve Immortal Ascension, had a very strong Dao heart, and had experienced many things, then even his faith in himself would have been affected. If it had, then that seed would also have been planted in him as well.

"To pass this trial in the top 10, I have to slaughter my way to the top." Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his cultivation base erupted with power. Now that he understood what was going on, he attacked without the slightest hesitation. He slashed his way into the battle like a dragon surrounded by a wake of blood.

Outside, Meng Hao's name suddenly appeared on the fifth golden gate stone stele, somewhere in the thousands, flashing with light.

1,000. 700. 500. 300... all the way past 100!

It continued to climb. 80. 70. 40....

People outside gasped at how quickly his name climbed up.

Only Granny Nine and Ling Yunzi, plus the Demonic Cultivator Horde Patriarch and the other Dao Realm experts, watched the stone stele with glittering eyes, lost in thought.

Chapter 1077: Dao Divinity Scripture!

The main purpose of the fifth golden gate stone stele was to develop the disciples' faith in the sect. When it came to matters of what was right and wrong, sometimes it was important to accept the decisions and explanations of the sect over one's personal judgment.

If a disciple couldn't show faith in the sect, then the trial by fire wouldn't begin, and the disciple would be ejected from the fifth stone stele, just like Meng Hao had almost been.

If a disciple could show faith, well... at that point the trial by fire would begin. Then, the level of their cultivation base, as well as their depth of faith in the sect, would determine their ranking.

Moments ago, within the world of the trial by fire, the blood-colored fiendish Devils had continued to appear, although their forms and appearances were different each time. When Meng Hao's name entered the top 1,000, the slaughter ended. However, the trial by fire did not end. The world around him shattered to pieces, and when it reformed, he was facing a different scene.

He was still in a sect, and was being given orders just like he had been before. This time, they were the invaders. A voice from the sect told them that this land was actually their native homeland!

They had to slaughter any resistance they met, and kill any opposing cultivators.

Things were complicated, leaving many people confused. However, in the end, what the sect said was true. This place... really was their former homeland!

The fighting went on, and Meng Hao's name rose up into the 500s. Then, everything changed again. A new world appeared, and new instructions were given by the sect.

Similar things happened when he reached the top 400, 300, 200... and even 100. Apparently, the changes occurred with every move of 100

positions.

It then continued to happen with more and more frequency. By the time he reached the top 20... he had experienced many, many worlds. The one thing that remained eternally unchanging was the sect. The orders from the sect were eternal. The judgment of the sect was eternal.

This was almost like a form of brainwashing. All of these experiences told Meng Hao that, in any matter, the sect was always correct. If he had faith in the sect, the trial by fire would continue. If hesitation regarding the sect rose up in his mind, then he would be expelled.

Eventually... Meng Hao's name reached the top 10. The world fell apart in front of him, and when it formed back together, it turned into... a very familiar place.

It was... Planet South Heaven!

This was the home that existed in his memories, a place where many, many things had occurred. He had numerous memories of this place, but right now, when he saw Planet South Heaven, his heart trembled.

His ability to put on a show of faith in the sect began to wane. The power of expulsion seemed to rise up faintly.

"This place... is an Outsider Planet! The true Planet South Heaven of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was destroyed and transformed into a door! Within that door appeared a new planet!

"Destroy this place! Use its power to collapse the Stargate!"

As the voice from the sect faded away, Meng Hao looked around to see countless cultivators surrounding him. Almost all of them were familiar to him, although he couldn't recall their names. However, he recognized that these people were fellow sect members from this phase of the trial by fire, people with whom he had charged into battle many times before!

Roars rang out as they charged toward Planet South Heaven. Meng Hao's heart trembled as he saw the familiar mountains, rivers, and lands, as well as old friends.

“Kill everything that lives on this planet! When the Outsiders come, their bloodlines will awaken, and they will become our enemies! Destroy this planet! Wipe it out from the starry sky!” As the voice echoed out, everyone charged forward into the slaughter. Only Meng Hao remained hovering there, silent.

The expulsion force began to gather, as if countless voices were beginning to call out to him, urging him forward. After a moment, Meng Hao took a deep breath and then advanced. He vanished, then reappeared up ahead, between the army of cultivators and the crowds from Planet South Heaven. He raised both hands up into the air to stop the advancing army.

However, in the moment he tried to do so, the expulsion force gripped him, and the voice of the sect roared in his ear.

“After all those experiences, you still don’t have faith in the sect!?!?” it said, sounding pained.

“Since that’s the case, then you shall be allowed to personally witness the truth!” The voice of the sect turned into a power that Meng Hao was powerless to resist, and forced him to remain motionless out in the starry sky.

At the same time, the army of fellow sect cultivators vanished. In an instant, Planet South Heaven seemed to pass through countless years. Suddenly, it began to tremble as an incredible force exploded out. Next, Meng Hao watched as the planet slowly began to move.

As it moved, shockingly... the former position of the planet revealed a black hole!

It looked like... a door!

After the door appeared, a beam of light could be seen. As it spread out, shocking roars could be heard coming from Planet South Heaven. At the same time as the light spread out, all of a sudden, a butterfly flew out from inside the door!

The butterfly was enormous, seemingly without end. Astonishingly,

numerous Outsider cultivators flew off of the butterfly, radiating murderous auras.

Wherever they passed, stars crumbled and planets shattered. Countless cultivators died screaming. The Ninth Mountain collapsed and the Ninth Sea boiled!

Before long, the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea was in ruins. Countless people died, many that Meng Hao knew, many that he didn't. They all died....

Planet East Victory, Planet North Reed, Planet West Felicity.... all crumbled.

In the final scene, a huge Xuanwu turtle let out an agonized howl, seemingly filled with infinite grief. Then it collapsed into a mass of blood and gore.

The vision ended, leaving Meng Hao gaping. He forgot about struggling and resisting. As the vision faded away, he was gripped by the power of expulsion and ejected from the world.

In the moment before he left, the ancient, grieving voice of the sect echoed in his ears: "Now do you believe?"

A tremor ran through him, and when everything became clear, he was back in the Nine Seas God World, standing outside of the fifth golden gate stone stele. He looked up to see that his name... was listed in 10th place!

Cries of astonishment rang out in all directions, but Meng Hao still seemed to be in another world. He could barely hear what anyone was saying as he stood there in front of the stone stele for a long moment.

It was at this point that Godmaster's voice spoke into his ear: "Every person's trial by fire in the fifth golden gate begins exactly the same way. However, those who reach the top 10 all experience different things...."

"What you saw could be visions of the future, or could be mere fantasies."

Meng Hao looked up at Godmaster. After a long moment of silence, he

took a deep breath, and dispelled his disquieting thoughts. Whether or not he wanted to admit it, this trial by fire had left a deep impression on him.

“In the end, power is everything!” he thought. “Even if that final scene was real, if I can get strong enough, then when that butterfly shows up, I’ll kill it! Then... everything will turn out different!

“Trusting the sect isn’t important. The important thing... is to make yourself strong enough!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a bright light as he clasped hands and bowed to Godmaster. Then he turned, his expression one of determination as he flew toward another of the golden gate stone steles.

The three month period was almost up, and before he left, Meng Hao wanted to get those 300,000,000 Immortal jades. He also wanted to leave an eternal mark on the Nine Seas God World.

“Other than the fifth stone stele, I want my name... to be in 1st place on all of the golden gate stone steles! If I can’t do it this time around, then I’ll definitely do it before I leave!” Meng Hao took a deep breath as he sped toward the seventh golden gate stone stele.

The seventh golden gate was the trial by fire of divine sense!

Divine sense wasn’t necessarily Meng Hao’s strong point. However, he had the first manual of the Dao Divinity Scripture, which he had cultivated in the past. According to the legends, the Dao Divinity Scripture was the supreme scripture for strengthening divine sense. However, after cultivating it, Meng Hao hadn’t felt anything particularly impressive! 1

At the very most, it had helped his divine sense a bit when he was in the Mortal Realm. Because he had entered the Immortal Realm and drastically raised his cultivation level, though, it had actually become a weak point for him.

That was why the Sea Daughter had been able to stop him in place with her divine sense. As for his weaknesses, once he became aware of them he would strive to remedy them. 2

“Could it be that I cultivated it incorrectly? Or perhaps it’s not the real

Dao Divinity Scripture?”

The Dao Divinity Scripture appeared in his mind as he flew forward. Not too much time passed before he appeared outside the seventh golden gate stone stele. Without the slightest hesitation, he stepped into the golden gate.

Surprisingly, as soon as he entered, his name appeared on the stone stele. All of the disciples who were gathering stared closely at Meng Hao's name and began to speculate what rank he would achieve.

Inside the world of the seventh golden gate, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared, and his hair whipped around. The entire world was a path consisting of 10,000 stone steps. Each step represented one rank.

The first 9,000 were far too simple for Meng Hao, but the last 1,000 got increasingly difficult. Every time he took a step, he would find himself surrounded by more divine sense power, which tried to bore into and collapse his mind.

Countless thoughts poured into him, confusing him, making it more and more difficult to endure.

At the same time, the longer he endured, the faster his divine sense grew. Furthermore, the Dao Divinity Scripture swirled inside his mind, and as he proceeded forward, he gained continuous enlightenment regarding the various mnemonics.

Time passed. Outside the seventh golden gate, the disciples watched as Meng Hao's name continued to rise. This time, his progress was much slower than with the previous stone steles.

“Divine sense is his weak spot!”

“He didn't advance this slowly in either the ninth stone stele or the fifth. The only way to smoothly get through the seventh golden gate is to have strong divine sense. And yet, he's going so slow!”

“From the look of it, it will be just too hard for him to get into the top 10!” Even as the crowd whispered their speculations, Meng Hao was in the world of the seventh stone stele, trembling violently. His eyes were bright

red, and yet, he was smiling.

“So, THAT’S how you cultivate the Dao Divinity Scripture!

“I understand!” Eyes flickering, he extended both hands, performing incantation gestures which caused his body to turn into something like a black hole. Rumbling could be heard as he began to absorb all of the attacking divine sense!

*

1. Meng Hao acquired the first manual of the Dao Divinity Scripture from Choumen Tai in chapter 301.
2. I have to admit that despite reading it in Chinese, then translating it and editing, I totally forgot about the part where Sea Daughter Bei Yu stopped Meng Hao in place with her divine sense. It was only a few chapters ago in chapter 1071.

Chapter 1078: Eight Gates, All Top 10!

Meng Hao hadn't cultivated the Dao Divinity Scripture incorrectly. However, this was not a scripture that was meant to be cultivated while sitting cross-legged in meditation. This scripture was unique in that... it was meant to be cultivated during battle, when actually utilizing divine sense.

With every clash of divine sense, the Dao Divinity Scripture would grow stronger. This was... a scripture born for the purpose of battle!

Meng Hao didn't understand that before, so no matter how he cultivated it, the result wasn't optimal. The last time he challenged the seventh golden gate, he hadn't used the Dao Divinity Scripture, but had relied solely on his divine sense and had gotten all the way to the 91st position, but could proceed no further.

This time, under the bombardment of so much divine sense, he finally understood the Dao Divinity Scripture much more clearly. It was like an epiphany.

"So that's how it is!" Even as his voice echoed out, he transformed into a black hole. As the boundless divines sense power rumbled toward him, just as it seemed on the verge of harming him, it was actually rapidly devoured by his own divine sense!

This was clearly... a terrifying way of absorbing the divine sense of others to bolster one's own!

Meng Hao was trembling, and yet, his eyes were shining brightly. He sped forward, trembling with every step as his divine sense rocketed up madly.

"More!" he cried, proceeding forward without stop. As the divine sense power smashing down onto him grew more intense, his own divine sense grew stronger.

Outside on the golden gate, his name rose higher on the list, passing the 91st position and quickly reaching the 40th!

An uproar of shocked cries instantly could be heard from the mouths of the audience.

Even more shocking to everyone was that the golden gate stone stele's eternally resplendent golden glow... almost seemed to be fading, as if the innate power of the trial by fire were weakening.

"The golden glow is fading. W-what's happening!?"

Everyone was shouting.

Even Granny Nine and her group, plus the Demonic Patriarch, were staring, clearly moved.

It didn't take long for the Dao Realm Patriarchs to guess the truth.

"He's absorbing the divine sense power inside of the stele!"

"The Nine Seas God World has been collecting divine sense in the seventh golden gate stone stele for all these years to ensure that it remains eternally in place! But now... he's actually absorbing it!"

"A normal Daoist magic couldn't do that! What technique has he cultivated?"

As everyone in the outside world was making various speculations, inside the stele, Meng Hao, who moments ago hadn't been glowing at all, was now covered with a thin veneer of golden light.

That golden light appeared when he only had 20 more steps to go!

A tremor ran through him, and he coughed up blood, and yet, his laughter grew even more maniacal. He had never imagined that this seventh golden gate stone stele would be so beneficial to him.

It could definitely be considered good fortune!

Not only did it give him a deep understanding of the Dao Divinity Scripture, but his previously weak divine sense was now rapidly becoming more powerful. By now, it was already close to ten times more powerful than it had been before beginning the trial.

Plus... it was continuing to get stronger.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and proceeded forward again. With each step, the divine sense around him grew more intense; booms continued to ring out like muffled thunder.

Soon, there were only nine steps ahead of him, and his name was already in 10th place on the seventh golden gate stone stele!

Meng Hao started to stagger a bit, and he could sense that he was reaching his limit; he was already saturated with the divine sense that he had absorbed. However, he also had the intense premonition that if he gave himself enough time to fully assimilate all the divine sense, he would become even stronger, and would be qualified... to vie for 1st place on the seventh golden gate!

In that case, he would also be qualified to vie for 1st place in the ninth golden gate!

Meng Hao's body rumbled as he vanished from the world of the seventh golden gate trial by fire. He appeared outside, the middle of an uproar as everyone looked at him in shock.

That was especially true... of a certain beautiful young woman not too far off in the distance. It was none other than Sea Daughter Bei Yu. Her name was currently listed in 3rd place on the stone stele!

She excelled in divine sense, but now, the sensation she got when looking at Meng Hao was completely different than before. His divine sense was far more powerful, and even just looking at him sent stabbing pains into her eyes.

Of the Nine Seas God World's nine golden gate stone steles, he had already completed three. Now, he sped toward the eighth.

It wasn't long before his name was climbing up the list on that stele too....

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao's name reached the top 10, then climbed to the 5th position before stopping. Then he appeared again, bursting with a domineering air that seemed incapable of being halted or blocked as he sped toward the sixth golden gate stone

stele.

You could say that Meng Hao's path embodied all of the various aspects of cultivation. Earlier, only his divine sense had been somewhat weak. As for his fleshly body and his cultivation base, both of them were incredibly powerful. Now that he had acquired good fortune regarding his divine sense, he was finally able to push himself to his peak.

That was also the peak of the Immortal Emperor Realm!

The Nine Seas God World was shaken, and increasing numbers of cultivators approached to bear witness to Meng Hao's madness. It had been years since anything like this had occurred, as Meng Hao repeatedly challenged one golden gate stone stele after another, and got into the top ten of each one!

"He got into the top 10 in the fifth, seventh, eighth, and ninth!!"

"From ancient times until now, there have only been four people who made it into the top 10 of all nine golden gate stone steles! Now there's going to be a fifth!"

In the beginning, the audience watching the scene hadn't been small. However, there were many people who believed that he would never be able to make it into the top 10 of all the stone steles. Now, however, as he continued to make steady progress, more and more people arrived to watch with keen anticipation.

An unsightly look could be seen on the face of the Demonic Patriarch. In fact, all of the Demonic cultivators had dark looks on their faces. They didn't want to admit that there was more than just hatred for Meng Hao in their hearts, and yet they had no other choice.

Meng Hao shot through the air in a streak of colorful light as he headed to the sixth golden gate stone stele. The Nine Seas God World was abuzz, and countless cultivators flew from all directions to watch. Meng Hao vanished into the sixth stele, and almost immediately, his name appeared on the rankings!

It rose up rapidly, almost exactly the same as in the others. Soon, cries of

shock could be heard, and the members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde looked grimmer than ever. As with all the others, Meng Hao's name eventually reached the top 10!

When that happened, the entire Nine Seas God World, including both Ancient and Immortal Realm cultivators, were all abuzz, and focused on nothing other than Meng Hao.

The next stele was the fourth, which Meng Hao rocketed toward and disappeared into. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, his name appeared in the top ten!

The clamor among the crowd grew more intense, and Meng Hao's image was even more deeply ingrained in the hearts and minds of all the disciples.

The combination of his razor-sharp tongue, his towering killing intent, and the intense valiance on display at the moment ensured that Meng Hao had a unique air.

It was... a completely and utterly domineering air!

In the third golden gate stone stele, boundless golden light rose up when he reached 7th place!

In the second golden gate stone stele, massive rumbling could be heard as his name appeared in the 4th position! Everyone felt as if their hearts were being struck by thunder.

When Meng Hao appeared from within the second golden gate stone stele and headed toward the first, there were tens of thousands of disciples gathered to watch.

They crowded around, all watching and bearing witness to what was happening.

"The ninth golden gate! He's already completed eight!! And gotten into the top 10 in all of them!!"

"The last one is the first golden gate stone stele. If he can get into the top ten in that one, then those 300,000,000 Immortal jades will be his!"

“For years, only four people in the Nine Seas God World have ever done this! Maybe there will now be five!”

“Not necessarily! The first golden gate is the hardest!”

The sound of countless discussions could be heard as Meng Hao arrived in front of the first golden gate stone stele, looking as firm and persistent as ever. He eyed the gate for a moment, and then took a deep breath.

“Trial by fire of the pressure of the Ninth Sea!” Without any further hesitation, he headed in!

When his vision became clear, shockingly, he found himself beneath the Nine Seas God World, surrounded by boundless sea water. In this position, the pressure weighing down from the Ninth Sea was even more intense than before.

A tremor ran through him as he sensed what felt like innumerable iron fetters weighing him down. Eyes glittering, he began to sink down.

300 meters. 1,500 meters. 3,000 meters.

6,000 meters. 9,000 meters. 15,000 meters.

The farther he sank, the more intense the pressure became. Gradually, it came to feel as if enormous mountains were crushing down on him. It didn't take very long before he had to exert incredible force even to blink his eyes.

Everything was pitch black, and it almost seemed as if the Ninth Sea had no sea floor, as if it just stretched down and down infinitely.

Soon, Meng Hao had reached a depth of 24,000 meters. According to the list outside, this was the same position Fan Dong'er had reached. The biggest difference was that she had remained in this position for more than forty hours.

Meng Hao's name had long since appeared on the first golden gate stone stele. It flickered as its position continued to change, getting higher and higher. The faces of the members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde grew darker and darker.

“I can still go deeper!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he realized that he hadn’t reached his limit yet. He was different from the other disciples of the Nine Seas God World. They practiced cultivation at these depths, and gradually allowed themselves to endure more and more pressure. In contrast, Meng Hao wanted to feel the most intense stimulation possible, and then see how long he could stay in that position.

It might be dangerous, but that would be the fastest way to acclimate himself to the pressure, and would also ensure that he was ready to enter the Windswept Realm.

Meng Hao’s eyes shone with determination!

27,000 meters. 30,000 meters! 36,000 meters... and he kept going!

The pressure increased, getting more intense. However, it continued to meet with resisting power from within Meng Hao. It was as if Meng Hao, despite his fleshly body and cultivation base being at their peak, was still growing!!

By now, he could see nothing but blackness, and even his newly empowered divine sense could only spread out a short distance. He was now 60,000 meters down.

At this point, he began to shake, and he knew that this was his limit. He could tell that he was on the verge of collapsing. Trembling, he settled down cross-legged and waited to see how long he could hold on!

Chapter 1079: Omen of the Door of the Ancient Realm

Currently, all the disciples outside were staring fixedly at the first golden gate stone stele, and that glittering name on its surface!

Meng Hao had made it into the top 10 in all of the other golden gate stone steles, from the second to the ninth. Now, if he reached the top 10 in the first stele as well, that meant that he would have already done enough to win the bet and get 300,000,000 Immortal jades!

When people thought of that vast amount of wealth, they trembled, even Fan Dong'er. It was an enormous sum that would move anyone, including entire clans and sects.

Despite being in the Dao Realm, the Demonic Patriarch's throat instantly went bone dry. It wasn't that the Demonic Cultivator Horde couldn't afford to pay out 300,000,000 Immortal jades. However... it was still an immense sum to them.

With Granny Nine and the others there, there wasn't a single trick they could pull to get out of the situation. Nor was there anything they could do to Meng Hao in the trial by fire. They could only look on with wide eyes.

Everyone watched as Meng Hao's name continued to rise until finally it came to rest... in 15th place!

Hushed whispers could be heard, and many people began to pant.

"15th place!! Depending on how long Meng Hao can hold out at that depth, he might be able to make it into the top 10!"

"Everyone from the 15th to the 5th place remained at 60,000 meters, which is a major boundary. The difference between them is how long they can hold out!"

"If he can endure for 40 hours, then he can squeeze past the current 10th place name, who endured for 38 hours. Then Meng Hao will occupy 10th place! Only by enduring for 70 hours... can he reach 5th place!"

Time passed. 2 hours. 4 hours... soon 10 hours had gone by. Meng Hao remained in the sea beneath the sect, body shivering, eyes bloodshot. The terrifying pressure was like an intense attack that continued for every second that passed.

It wasn't that Meng Hao wasn't powerful, nor that he lacked a profound cultivation base. Instead, he simply hadn't been in the Nine Seas God World for long enough, and was far removed from the cultivators who had actually been born here.

Although people like that didn't have fleshly bodies that matched up to Meng Hao's, and even if their cultivation bases didn't match up to his either, they had naturally adapted. To them, sinking down and enduring the pressure was a much simpler thing.

As for Meng Hao, he had to pay a much heavier price to catch up to the others in such a short period of time.

He continued to hold on, and soon, another 6 hours had passed. Meng Hao had already been sitting there cross-legged for 16 hours. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his skin was splitting all over. From the look of it, if he made even a slight movement, he would be on the verge of completely collapsing.

His Eternal stratum was hard at work, and his eyes were fully bloodshot. He could sense that this pressure was the limit his body could take.

Because of the intensity of it, his cultivation base was also fighting back madly, causing rumbling sounds to fill his mind.

The rumbling grew more intense, as if every beat of his heart and every surge of his cultivation base cause his whole body to shake. Although blood oozed out all over him, he could sense that he... was becoming stronger!

"When it reaches the point where I can unleash the full extent of my battle prowess at this depth, that will indicate... that I've completely acclimated to a depth of 60,000 meters!" His eyes glittered, and he clenched his teeth.

Soon the 20th hour had passed. 20 hours. 30 hours....

Outside of the first golden gate stone stele, the crowd was in an uproar. Because he had endured for 30 hours, Meng Hao's name continued to rise, all the way from the 15th position to the 14th. Then the 13th, and finally... to the 11th!!

"Only 8 more hours, and he'll reach the top 10!"

"From ancient times until now there have only been four people in the Nine Seas God World who have ever been able to make it into all the top 10s! If Meng Hao can last for another 8 hours, then... there will be a fifth!"

As the crowd discussed the matter heatedly, Meng Hao sat with his eyes closed to cover the veins of blood. He continued to endure despite what sounded like thunder pounding inside of his body. He was trembling as his cultivation base fought a desperate battle with the pressure from the outside, pressure that was trying to crush him to death.

"Just a little bit longer. I can hold out just a bit longer!" He wasn't sure where his name was on the list, but he did know that for every hour he could endure, he would be that much more likely to make it into the top 10.

"For empowerment! And for the 300,000,000 Immortal jades!" Meng Hao's eyes suddenly snapped open, revealing a gleam of madness. He might be trembling, and gritting his teeth to the point where they were about to shatter, but he knew that he could still hang on.

Soon the 32nd hour had passed. Then it was 34 hours. 36 hours.... all the way to 40 hours!

The atmosphere outside of the golden gate stone stele was explosive. Everyone was completely shaken, and all eyes were fixed on the name that could now be seen in the 10th position.

Meng Hao!

He had succeeded! He had surpassed the person who had previously held 10th place, and was now in the top 10!

“The top 10! Meng Hao is now in the top 10!!”

“From ancient times until now, he is the fifth person to do this!!” The crowd was in an uproar, and their clamor echoed out in all directions.

Fan Dong'er had a complex expression on her face. She couldn't help but admit that Meng Hao... had surpassed all the other current Chosen of their generation. It was as if his overwhelming superiority enabled him to place himself far, far ahead of everyone else. He was like a vast mountain sitting in front of all the other Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, a mountain that was preeminently difficult to pass over.

The Demonic Patriarch stood there silently. After a moment, he sighed inwardly, then turned and left. He knew that there was nothing he could do now. Meng Hao had won. He had a mind to renege on the wager, but he knew that it was actually impossible to do so.

Nursing his hatred deep in his heart, the Demonic Patriarch snorted coldly, and his eyes glinted as he shot off into the distance, a streak of prismatic light.

In the moment that Meng Hao endured past 40 hours, blood spurted out all over his body. He was on the verge of collapse, and could not continue on any further. He could sense that under the vast pressure, his cultivation base was getting weaker and weaker. The more he fought back, the weaker he would get. Even the light in his eyes was growing dimmer. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, his body trembled, and a strange expression appeared in his eyes.

He had suddenly noticed that although he was like a candle on the verge of sputtering out, unexpectedly... a regenerative force had suddenly sprung up inside of him.

That power had apparently been forced out of him because of the intense pressure bearing down on him, and also because he was now in the Realm of the Immortal Emperor. At this point, all of the remaining power within his cultivation base was being forced out explosively.

Rumbling could be heard, and his eyes began to shine even brighter. The regenerative force rapidly restored him, causing his heart to tremble, and

his fleshly body... to suddenly grow rapidly, even more so than his cultivation base.

The pounding of his heart sounded like thunder in his ears.

With each beat, the tears in his skin were healed, and gradually, an enormous door opened up in front of him!

That door was even more majestic than the Door of Immortality, and even more ancient. In fact, it was so archaic that it caused everything to tremble violently.

The feeling emanating out of that door was not one of Immortality, but rather, a boundlessly Ancient feeling!

The instant Meng Hao saw the door, his heart began to pound wildly; he knew exactly what it was. It was the door... that led to the Ancient Realm!

When a cultivator entered the Ancient Realm, the Door of the Ancient Realm would appear, in much the same way that a door appeared when entering the Immortal Realm. Once the door was pushed open, an enormous bell would appear!

That bell was the Ancient Bell, and once struck, it would ignite Soul Lamps. The flame of his life force would materialize the Realmwind, and in the following days and years... that wind would be used to extinguish the Soul Lamps!

Then he would enter a Realm in which the lamps were extinguished but the cultivator was not. When all of the Soul Lamps were extinguished, he would be at the peak of the Ancient Realm, and would have forged his foundation for the Dao Realm!

What he was seeing right now... was an omen of the Ancient Realm!

Anyone else other than Meng Hao would have long since been able to step into the Ancient Realm. However, the path he walked was different than anyone else. He was not willing to try to step into the Ancient Realm until he had fully absorbed all four of his Nirvana Fruits.

And yet, here was an omen of the Ancient Realm, not because of his

cultivation base, but rather...

“My fleshly body!” he thought. His eyes gleamed brightly. He had never imagined that he would be able to force out the omen of the Ancient Realm while facing the pressure of the Ninth Sea.

“I understand now!” His eyes shone with the light of understanding. Actually, his fleshly body had long since passed what could be categorized as an Immortal Realm fleshly body. However, the door to the Ancient Realm had never appeared.

This was something he could not inquire of others about. Even the ancient records of most sects and clans wouldn't contain the tiniest scrap of a clue about the matter. After all... in countless years, it was extremely rare for any body cultivator to reach a true Immortal fleshly body. As for an Ancient Realm fleshly body, that was even rarer. Even if such people did exist, everyone had different circumstances, and as such, would use different methods to make their breakthroughs.

But right now, he understood how to find his own path!

“The more by fleshly body is damaged, the stronger it gets! That is my path! In that case, if I can go down further... then perhaps I can enter the Ancient Realm, and my fleshly body will be even more powerful!”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He was just about to take action when he realized that the regenerative power within him was fading away. Furthermore, the boundless pressure of the Ninth Sea at this depth of 60,000 meters was actually forcing him up from his current position!

In the blink of an eye, he vanished, and when he reappeared, he was outside the first golden gate stone stele. As soon as he appeared, he coughed up a vast quantity of blood. At the same time, the pressure suddenly changed completely. Cracking sounds could be heard from inside of him. Without the pressure against him, his cultivation base suddenly exploded upward. The sound of the roaring crowd washed over him.

All of the Nine Seas God World disciples who had come to observe were

completely shaken. They had personally witnessed Meng Hao's name rise to the top. They had seen something that hadn't happened for years! A fifth person successfully entered the top 10 of all of the golden gates!

Surrounded by the shouts of the crowd, Meng Hao turned around to look at the stone stele, and found that his name was in the 10th position.

"10th...." he murmured, and his eyes filled with the gleam of ambition.

"Senior Granny Nine, please give me some instant regeneration medicinal pills!" He suddenly spun, clasped hands and bowed deeply to Granny Nine.

Granny Nine looked closely at Meng Hao, and was about to say something, when suddenly she looked up, as if she had just noticed something. It wasn't just her. All of the Dao Realm experts, including the two Demonic Patriarchs that had already left, suddenly turned with flickering faces.

"The aura of the great Door of the Ancient Realm. This...." Granny Nine gasped and looked back at Meng Hao. Deep in her eyes, a strange light gleamed. Without any further hesitation, she tossed a shining, nine-colored medicinal pill bottle down to Meng Hao.

Chapter 1080: Crimson Door of the Ancient Realm

It was at this point that two aura streams exploded out from the Nine Seas God World. They belonged to the Demonic Patriarchs, and they immediately shot up and then out of the Ninth Sea.

It wasn't just them. The two Dao Realm experts from the other two factions were shaken, and also sent divine sense out to examine the situation for themselves.

Ling Yunzi looked shocked, then glanced back and Meng Hao with a profound look of anticipation.

Godmaster smiled faintly, then closed his eyes.

No one but the Dao Realm cultivators could sense the aura up above the Ninth Sea. All they saw was Granny Nine throwing the medicinal pills to Meng Hao.

The medicinal pills and the medicinal pill bottle seemed completely beyond the ordinary.

Meng Hao grabbed the bottle, opened it, and took a whiff. Based on his skill in the Dao of alchemy, he was immediately able to determine the effect of the pills. They were pills of restoration that would be considered extravagant even for cultivators of the Ancient Realm. They were something Dao Realm experts might possess, but not in number. Even one could be considered extremely precious.

Meng Hao was moved, and once again clasped hands to Granny Nine, then unhesitatingly popped a pill into his mouth.

The instant the medicinal pill entered his mouth, Meng Hao felt like he was shaking violently. His cultivation base was rapidly restored, and in the space of only a few breaths, his eyes began to shine brightly, and he was fully back at his peak state.

Furthermore, because of the way he had fought back against the

pressure of the Ninth Sea, he was even more powerful than he had been before!

“I’ve won the bet, and now those 300,000,000 Immortal jades belong to me!” he murmured, taking a deep breath. Then he turned to look at the first golden gate stone stele, and a wild ambition could be seen burning in his eyes.

“And now, my fleshly body has reached a critical juncture. In that case, I might as well go for broke....

“With the exception of the fifth stone stele, I want to be 1st in all of them!” Under the shocked eyes of the disciples of the Nine Seas God World, and the cold, venomous stares of the Demonic cultivators, he once again entered the first golden gate stone stele.

The moment he vanished, the crowds of disciples went wild.

“He’s actually going back into the first golden gate? He already got into the top 10, could it be that he wants to get an even better ranking?”

“This trial by fire isn’t something that you can complete in just one shot. It requires repeated cultivation and improvement. Meng Hao... is a bit impatient.”

“Even if he challenges it again now, he won’t get higher than 5th place. He definitely won’t get into the top 4!”

Fan Dong’er hesitated for a moment. She just couldn’t believe that Meng Hao would be doing something like this rashly. In her judgement, he was a cunning person who never did things unless he knew they would benefit him. For him to make a choice like this meant that he had good reason to do so.

As the discussions went on outside, Meng Hao once again appeared in the deep sea beneath the Nine Seas God World. This time, he sank down rapidly and without the slightest pause.

Soon, he had reached his previous limit of 60,000 meters. There, he paused for a moment, allowing his cultivation base to erupt out and fight back against the pressure. Gritting his teeth, he continued to drop down.

He wanted to advance his fleshly body into the Ancient Realm, to be more powerful. The only way to do that was to continue to sink downward. There, the pressure was more terrifying, and his body would be refined even further.

By forcing himself past that final line of demarcation, and then exploding out... he was convinced that his fleshly body would become incredibly terrifying.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Blood oozed out of his mouth, and cracking sounds could be heard inside of him. As he sank down, the pressure became terrifying to an astonishing degree. His body rippled and distorted as the pressure battered against him.

However, he continued to sink down. 75,000 meters. 84,000 meters....

His mind filled with rumbling sounds, and his flesh was covered with splits and tears. The flame of his life force was fading, and his cultivation base was under such enormous pressure that it almost couldn't budge.

He felt like all of Heaven and Earth were weighing down on him, and his vision began to swim. However, he continued to go all out, to spare nothing to continue on downward.

As he continued to sink to lower and lower levels, certain late Ancient Realm experts of the Nine Seas God World, who were currently in secluded meditation, suddenly opened their eyes and looked up into the sky, their expressions flickering slightly.

Soon, the mid Ancient Realm experts also noticed something happening in the outside world, and their eyes widened.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao in his madness sank down into the Ninth Sea. He had already reached a depth of 90,000 meters, and the pressure was indescribably terrifying, dozens of times greater than the pressure at 60,000 meters.

Everything was pitch black, and by now, it almost felt like he wasn't surrounded by water, but wind!

Perhaps that feeling was just an illusion; Meng Hao couldn't sense things very clearly. By now, the flame of his life force was swaying weakly, as if it was about to be extinguished. His body was twisted and warped, as if it might be broken at any moment.

Just as he seemed to be on the verge of losing consciousness, he suddenly let out a shout in his heart.

"This is my final limit! Let the great Door of the Ancient Realm... come!"

Almost in that same moment, even the Immortal Realm cultivators in the Nine Seas God World were able to detect that something was happening. Their faces flickered as they began to look up... whereupon everyone gasped.

"That's..."

"The great Door of the Ancient Realm! That's the great Door of the Ancient Realm which appears when someone breaks through from the Immortal Realm to the Ancient Realm!!"

"Someone is breaking out of the Immortal Realm and stepping into the Ancient Realm!!"

"No, that can't be right! How come that door is crimson? It should be gray!!"

The Nine Seas God World was in chaos as voices echoed out everywhere. The entire Ninth Sea was roaring, and countless sea beasts trembled in hiding, too frightened even to peek out to see what was happening.

In the starry sky up above... countless motes of starlight had formed together into the shape of a matchlessly shocking door.

That door was completely crimson, but it radiated an ancient, primordial aura which caused the seawater to roil. It seemed to represent Heaven and Earth, the will of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"A crimson Door of the Ancient Realm! That represents... the Ancient Realm fleshly body!"

"That's definitely... Ancient Realm fleshly body!" Hoarse exclamations

like this could be heard coming from the mouths of the wise and knowledgeable late Ancient Realm experts in the Nine Seas God World.

Soon, more and more people began to realize what the crimson Door of the Ancient Realm meant, and soon, the whole Nine Seas God World was abuzz. Almost everyone forgot about Meng Hao; after all, witnessing the appearance of an Ancient Realm expert was much more interesting than binge-watching Meng Hao challenge the golden gates.

Fan Dong'er was the only one who, after sensing the fluctuations of the great Door of the Ancient Realm, suddenly looked at Meng Hao's name on the first golden gate stone stele.

In that same moment... the Door of the Ancient Realm above the Ninth Sea began to emit a crimson glow, which pierced down through the water into the Nine Seas God World, and then... landed on the first golden gate stone stele! Everyone's minds reeled.

"It's Meng Hao!!!"

"The only person in the first golden gate stone stele trial by fire is Meng Hao!!"

"How... how is this possible!? Meng Hao is entering the Ancient Realm? An Ancient Realm fleshly body?" People cried out in disbelief and shock. Fan Dong'er staggered backward and bit her lip. Meng Hao was truly an enormous mountain blocking the way of an entire generation of Chosen, a mountain that... was now growing even higher!

Rumbling echoed out as the crimson glow pierced into the golden gate stone stele. and then appeared under the sect in the sea. In the blink of an eye, it was at the 90,000-meter mark... and was on Meng Hao!

Meng Hao's body was twisted and distorted. His divine sense was blurry, and he was on the verge of passing out. However, when the crimson glow enveloped him, his eyes began to shine brightly, and he quivered. The intense roaring that filled him knocked him to his senses.

In that moment of clarity, he raised his head and shot upward from the 90,000 meter mark all the way until he left the golden gate and appeared

once again in the middle of the Nine Seas God World.

Everyone, even the Dao Realm experts, were looking at him. Countless eyes could see him, bathed in crimson light, rising up into the air. He passed out of the Nine Seas God World's spell formation, through the seawater... and up into the sky above the sea!

Numerous cultivators flew out of the Nine Seas God World to observe. The Ninth Sea itself was roaring, and countless people were looking up into the sky.

They saw a gigantic crimson Door of the Ancient Realm, and they could sense a will that caused them to tremble. It was a will that seemed to represent Heaven and Earth, a will that left even the Dao Realm experts in awe.

As he hovered within the red light, Meng Hao's body rapidly recovered. He rose up, higher and higher, until he was directly in front of the Door of the Ancient Realm. By the time the glow vanished, Meng Hao was back at his peak.

He could also sense his fleshly body growing incredibly powerful. Cracking sounds rang out as he rapidly grew to a height of nine meters.

He almost looked like a giant, and although he was tiny in comparison to the Door of the Ancient Realm, his explosive, surging energy could shake Heaven and Earth.

He was the subject of countless gazes who had seen Immortal Realm cultivators step into the Ancient Realm. However, no one had ever witnessed such a feat when it came to the fleshly body!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He could sense that his cultivation base was sealed, which meant that he could only rely on the power of his fleshly body. Although the shocking transformations of heaven and earth that were about to occur weren't nearly as strong as when one's cultivation base entered the Ancient Realm, it was still considered Ancient Tribulation!

He suddenly flew toward the Door of the Ancient Realm, roaring as his

hands formed, not fists, but palms, that slammed into the door. He did not rotate his cultivation base, but rather, relied only on his fleshly body to push forward.

BOOM!

The great Door of the Ancient Realm shook, and opened a sliver, causing a wind to blow out that instantly weakened the flame of his life force.

“No magical techniques. This is my fleshly body Ancient Realm Tribulation. However, my secret techniques can still be utilized!” As his voice echoed out, his Immortal meridians, despite being sealed, did not prevent him from using that personal secret technique. His 123 Immortal meridians could still be transformed into a single fleshly body meridian.

Suddenly, his fleshly body grew even larger, and an intense power erupted out of him. At the same time, both hands slammed down onto the Door of the Ancient Realm. With a huge roar, he shoved with all his might.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Everyone watched as the gigantic Door of the Ancient Realm... opened!!

Chapter 1081: Summoning Soul Lamps, Stepping Into the Ancient Realm!

The crimson Door of the Ancient Realm let out an intense rumble as it opened. Then, a wind sprang up, which swept over Meng Hao, causing his life force and his soul to hover on the verge of extermination.

In the face of such danger, Meng Hao let out a hoarse shout. At the same time, his heart started to beat rapidly, and shocking fleshly body power transformed into a surge of qi that fought back against the Realmwind!

The cultivators of the Nine Seas God World who hovered above the surface of the water were all watching as this happened.

After the wind passed, shockingly, something else appeared within the crimson Door of the Ancient Realm. That was... a bell!

“The Bell of the Ancient Realm!!”

“The Bell of the Ancient Realm has appeared! When you ring that bell, you can ignite Soul Lamps. However many times you ring the bell, that’s how many Soul Lamps you can ignite!”

“Generally speaking, it’s one Soul Lamp for every five Immortal meridians that you have!!”

“This Meng Hao... he has 123 Immortal meridians. He... he can ignite more than twenty Soul Lamps?”

“The more Soul Lamps you have, the more difficult the Ancient Realm will be for you. On the other hand, you will be that much more powerful!”

As the shouts of astonishment rang out, Meng Hao took a deep breath. He was not entering the Ancient Realm with his cultivation base, but rather, his fleshly body. He actually wasn’t sure if any Soul Lamps would appear.

Furthermore, Meng Hao had no one to follow as an example. Although his fleshly body appeared to be that of a body cultivator, he was actually different from body cultivators. Body cultivators needed to bathe in the

blood of a God to be able to rise up into another Realm. Furthermore, their type of cultivation was not separated into Immortal and Ancient.

Meng Hao walked a different path, a path far removed from the norm. His was not the ancient path of body cultivators, but rather, a combination of different systems of cultivation. He was walking his own path.

“Let’s find out if I’ll get any Soul Lamps or not!” Meng Hao took a deep breath. and without any further hesitation, stepped forward into the great Door of the Ancient Realm. He saw the enormous Bell of the Ancient Realm in front of him, clenched his right hand into a fist, and punched out.

The tolling of the bell echoed out, and waves surged across the Ninth Sea. Everything blurred, and the world distorted. All the cultivators felt their minds reeling.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, and his body showed signs of withering. His life force, as well as his qi and blood, were now being absorbed, not by the Bell of the Ancient Realm, but rather, by a black-hole-like vortex that had appeared in his chest!

Meng Hao took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Moments later, a shocking image appeared in his chest!

It was... the image of a Soul Lamp! It looked like a tiny person, a person sitting there cross-legged in the position of Meng Hao’s physical heart!

“So Soul Lamps really will appear!”

“Stepping into the fleshly body Ancient Realm also produces Soul Lamps! This Meng Hao is in defiance of the Heavens!” To the spectators, shock piled upon shock until it seemed beyond belief.

That was because they realized that the tiny person that was the Soul Lamp was actually not burning, but instead, was already extinguished!

Everyone was stunned. Normally speaking, striking the Bell of the Ancient Realm caused ignited Soul Lamps to appear. Later on, those lamps would be extinguished one by one, giving the cultivator increased power.

However, Meng Hao's Soul Lamp was already extinguished.... He was exactly the opposite of everyone else! Fleshly body Soul Lamps did not need to be extinguished, they needed to be ignited!

Godmaster's eyes snapped open, and a slight tremor ran through him. His voice hoarse, he said, "Anti-Ancient!!"

"It's... anti-Ancient!!" An expression of disbelief appeared on Granny Nine's face. Ling Yunzi gasped, and looked shocked. As for the two Demonic Patriarchs, they looked like they had been struck by lightning. They trembled as they stared at Meng Hao in astonishment.

When the Soul Lamps of the Ancient Realm fleshly body appeared, that was shocking in and of itself. However, for the lamps to appear in an extinguished state caused the Dao Realm Patriarchs to suddenly remember a legendary and terrifying stage within the Ancient Realm!

That was... the anti-Ancient Realm!

According to the legend, in the heyday of the Paragon Immortal Realm, there had once appeared a person whose Ancient Realm was the opposite of the norm. Instead of extinguishing Soul Lamps, that person ignited them.

The details of that person's life was shrouded in mystery, and subsequent generations knew little about him. All that was known was that it was forbidden to follow in his footsteps. The Paragons of the time intentionally wiped out all information about him. Later, the Paragon Immortal Realm was destroyed, and the term 'anti-Ancient' became a term known only to the Three Great Daoist Societies. No one outside of those sects had even heard of it.

In the moment that the Dao Realm experts were shaken, Meng Hao took a deep breath, opened his eyes and struck his fist out once more toward the Bell of the Ancient Realm.

That strike caused the bell to toll, and Meng Hao's body to tremble. He withered some more, and a wave of weakness caused him to shudder.

A second Soul Lamp appeared, this time in his abdomen, absorbing

more of his qi, blood, and life force!

“Fleshly body Soul Lamps are so powerful....” he thought. He quickly consumed a medicinal pill, then frowned when he realized that the pill... did nothing. It was incapable of restoring him. Furthermore, his Eternal stratum was sealed, and could not spring into motion to help him recover.

His eyes glittered, and he ignored the withering of his body, striking out a third time, and then a fourth!

His body withered even more, until he looked like nothing more than a bag of bones. However, two more Soul Lamps appeared, one in each of his shoulders.

Meng Hao staggered back a bit; the sense of weakness that filled him seemed to have reached a pinnacle of intensity. However, he wasn't willing to stop with only four Soul Lamps. Gritting his teeth and growling, he punched the bell three more times! Every strike cause him to wither even more!

Instantly, two Soul Lamps appeared in his knees, and one in his forehead. By now, he didn't even look like a person, but rather, a skeleton! His life force was weak, like a candle on the verge of being snuffed out!

This was a type of weakness he had never experienced before, and it made him feel like a feeble old man laying on his deathbed. All of his life force had been handed over to the new Soul Lamps!

Heart, abdomen, shoulders, knees, forehead: a total of seven Soul Lamps!

At this point, the will of the Bell of the Ancient Realm could sense that Meng Hao had reached his limit, and began to fade away.

“I'm not finished yet!” Seeing the bell beginning to fade away, he threw his head back and roared! Both hands turned into fists, and flew toward the Bell of the Ancient Realm. His entire body appeared to have been destroyed, vanished into thin air. And yet... two Soul Lamps suddenly appeared in his eyes!

Nine Soul Lamps!

His Soul Lamps were unlike anyone else's. They even looked different. The Soul Lamps of others actually resembled lamps, but Meng Hao's Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps looked like people!

Each and every one sat there cross-legged, looking very somber and dignified. They seemed threatening without appearing to be angry, and if you looked closely, you would be able to see that they looked like exact representations of Meng Hao!

Nine Soul Lamps distributed throughout his body. They did not circulate around him, but rather... existed inside!

This was the Ancient Realm fleshly body!

In almost the same moment that the final Soul Lamps appeared, the Bell of the Ancient Realm faded away, and a fierce wind blew out from inside the huge door. When it touched him, he shook, and a majestic qi and blood power poured into him.

His body soaked it in like a rice paddy after a drought. It contained boundless nourishing power that transformed into incredible life force inside of him. It nourished his blood and flesh, grew his bones, fed his fleshly body. It caused his qi and blood to experience rapid and terrifying growth.

He could clearly sense the incredible transformations occurring. Cracking sounds rang out, and he seemed to be completely shedding his previous self. His fleshly body power broke completely past the peak of the Immortal Realm, stepping into a new level, that of the Ancient Realm!

An Ancient Realm fleshly body appeared, causing all Heaven and Earth to tremble. The Ninth Sea roared, and Meng Hao could sense the nine Soul Lamps inside of him madly absorbing all of the rushing Realmwind. It was as if... they were using that power to ignite themselves!

Meng Hao could sense that with each Soul Lamp that he ignited, his fleshly body would grow even more powerful!

As the wind blew, his Soul Lamps began to show signs of igniting. In the end, however, the wind wasn't enough to complete the job. Only the two

Soul Lamps in his eyes came to life.

In that moment, Meng Hao felt like a million lightning bolts were crashing around in his mind. Shaken, he felt his fleshly body power rising explosively. The air around him distorted, and as he clenched his fists, it shattered.

It was a boundless feeling of power, giving him the confidence that he could easily slay Ancient Realm experts with numerous extinguished Soul Lamps. It made him feel like... the power of one punch could shake the entire world. Meng Hao truly felt... much more powerful!

The difference between himself now and moments before... was incredibly vast!

He took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with a bright light. Behind him, the great Door of the Ancient Realm slowly faded away. As it disappeared, the Ninth Sea finally returned to a state of calm.

In contrast, the hearts of the countless cultivators above the surface of the sea were anything but calm. The scene they had just witnessed was the fastest they had ever seen anyone enter the Ancient Realm, and also the most shocking!

That shock would not end, nor would it ever be forgotten. This day could be considered the day that Meng Hao truly rose to prominence in the Nine Seas God World, and was a day that would not be forgotten for countless years to come!

Meng Hao turned into a bright beam of light that shot back down into the sea, through the water, into the Nine Seas God World, and then into the golden gate stone stele to finally appear beneath the sect in the deep sea!

Great waves rolled out across the surface of the sea, and a vortex appeared deep under the water. However, the regions down below which had previously exerted massive pressure on Meng Hao now barely affected him at all.

30,000 meters. 60,000 meters. 90,000 meters. 120,000 meters....

Meng Hao surged with energy as he shot downward madly. At the same time, his name shot up in the rankings on the first golden gate stone stele. Although he was in 5th place, the name in 1st place only had a depth of 99,000 meters next to it! 1

Meng Hao had already vastly exceeded everyone, except in the matter of the time spent. However... not every rank of depth required time spent. Anyone who could sink down past 180,000 meters would automatically shatter the records of any other name, and would be completely deserving to stand in 1st place!

Rumbling filled Meng Hao as he sank down further. 150,000 meters.... 180,000 meters. 210,000 meters. 240,000 meters.... Finally, when he reached 261,429 meters, he caught sight of the sea floor, and was completely shaken. 2

Outside on the first golden gate, a bright golden light of unprecedented intensity shot up into the air as Meng Hao's name reached... 1st place!

When people saw the number next to his name that represented the depth he had reached, they were thunderstruck.

*

1. 99,000 meters is “3 wan 3 qian zhang,” or “3 (10,000), 3 (1,000) zhang”.
2. 261,429 meters is 87,143 zhang.

Chapter 1082: The Third Fist Strike!

“First golden gate stone stele... 1st place....”

“I once heard that the absolute limit is more than 260,000 meters, but he... actually reached the sea floor! That’s a place that only truly powerful experts can see....” Murmurs of astonishment could be heard in the crowd. Fan Dong’er was in a daze, and Bei Yu was panting in astonishment.

261,429 meters!

The distance the land mass of the Nine Seas God World maintained from the bottom of the sea had always been a fixed number from ancient times until now. Furthermore, no one whose name was recorded on the first golden gate stone stele had ever reached that depth.

The rankings only contained names of Ancient Realm experts with five or less extinguished Soul Lamps. Because of that rule, no one with that amount of Soul Lamps... had ever gone so deep.

It was a position that instantly put someone at the peak, in 1st place, even if they only managed to stay there for an instant. Not even Demonic cultivators who were born in the Ninth Sea could go down so far.

The crowds outside of the first golden gate stone stele burst into a commotion. Cries of shock rang out, and the astonishment felt by the disciples of the Nine Seas God World reached a tempestuous level that swept across the entire sect.

The Demonic Cultivator Horde was equally shaken. When they saw Meng Hao’s name on the first golden gate stone stele, their hearts were filled with dread.

Although they instinctively hated him, in the cultivation world, people respected the powerful. The Demonic cultivators also held this awe deep in their hearts, so despite their hatred of him, henceforth, they would no longer dare to provoke him further.

Meng Hao was using pure power to shake all hearts.

Currently, Meng Hao was now down at the bottom of the Ninth Sea.

Despite the incredibly terrifying power of his fleshly body, he could still fill the indescribable pressure weighing down on him.

Because of that pressure, he would not be able to remain in this place for very long, perhaps only ten breaths of time. As he looked around, his heart was shaken to a profound level.

At the bottom of the Ninth Sea... he saw a corpse....

It was a vast, gargantuan corpse that seemed to make up the entire bottom of the Ninth Sea!

It was vastly archaic and ancient, and a huge gash could be seen splitting it apart....

Meng Hao was currently standing on the corpse's head. Visible on the forehead were... eight dim stars!

"A God...." he thought, shaken. He suddenly recalled Wang Tengfei, and great waves of shock rolled through him, causing him to stand there silently in the pressure. 1

He had already reached the point where he couldn't hold on any longer, and he gave one last look over the corpse. Then he turned, and prepared to head back up. However, it was in that moment in which he turned, that in his peripheral vision, he suddenly noticed that located on one of the stars on the corpse's head... was a person!

It was a woman, wearing a long, violet garment. It was... a woman that Meng Hao remembered! It was... an old friend from Planet South Heaven!!

She stood there atop the corpse, her expression complex. 2

"Han Bei!!" Meng Hao thought, his eyes widening.

Everything was dark, with only the corpse letting off the faintest of light. Even with Meng Hao's intensely powerful fleshly body, and vision as sharp as lighting, he could just barely make out the image clearly.

He began to tremble, and opened his eyes widely to look closer, but by that time, nothing was visible atop the star. It was almost as if what he had seen was nothing more than an illusion.

Before he could react, the pressure at the sea bottom forced him up. He saw the corpse fading away below him, and his eyes flickered.

“I feel like what I saw... was real! It was no illusion!

“I’m not sure what caused that to happen, but that woman... was Han Bei!” Meng Hao was lost in thought as he recalled all the things that had occurred between the two of them.

“Nine ancient family names....” he thought, eyes flashing. Then he thought back to how Han Bei had gone missing back on Planet South Heaven. After everyone had returned from the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, Han Bei had vanished completely.

Suddenly, Meng Hao recalled how strange her disappearance was. It was not simply that nobody could find her. Actually... other than him, nobody even seemed to remember her at all.

It was something he had analyzed in the past, the fact that after the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, nobody mentioned Han Bei at all. Regardless of whether any given person personally knew her or not, all traces of her seemed to have been wiped away.

Thinking about this now, Meng Hao realized that it was more of a feeling, or a guess. There was one way to prove whether or not his theory was right, and that was Chu Yuyan. She was someone who should remember Han Bei.

When she woke up, he would ask her. Then he would know the truth!

If Chu Yuyan remembered Han Bei, then everything Meng Hao had speculated was simply over-thinking. However, if Chu Yuyan... didn’t remember Han Bei, then... it meant Meng Hao would definitely have to think it over some more.

“I’ll know for sure when Chu Yuyan wakes up.” Meng Hao glanced back down at the sea floor before shooting up toward the sect. He wouldn’t forget the things he had just seen. Shortly, he reached the top, and vanished.

When he walked out of the first golden gate stone stele, he turned back

to look at the list of names, and smiled. Then he sped toward the second stele.

The eyes of all the disciples were involuntarily glued to his back.

After stepping into the second golden gate stone stele, Meng Hao only needed the time it takes half an incense stick to burn before reaching 1st place. Boundless golden light erupted out from the stele.

This was his second 1st place spot.

The crowd was shouting and hollering. How could the disciples not realize what Meng Hao was trying to do...?

“He wants to take 1st place in all the steles!!”

“1st place in all of the nine stone steles?”

“It’s not even worth talking about. From ancient times until now, the most 1st place spots taken by a single person has been six. And that only lasted for a hundred years before the spot was taken by someone else....”

“This Meng Hao, could it be... that he’s going to pull off another miracle!?”

Rumbling could be heard as Meng Hao flew through the air toward the third golden gate. This time he was even faster; he only need thirty breaths of time before his name sailed past all the other names to the 1st place position.

The third 1st place spot!!

The crowds were shaken and in an uproar. Gasps could be heard as Meng Hao emerged and proceeded... toward the fourth golden gate stone stele!

Moments later, boundless golden light rose up, staining the entire ocean the color of gold. Meng Hao... had his fourth 1st place spot!

Four steles, all of them 1st place!

The Nine Seas God World was boiling with excitement. Meng Hao really was pulling off a miracle, and his image was being unforgettably engraved

into the hearts of an entire generation.

Meng Hao chose not to enter the fifth stele. That one, he didn't need!

He shot past it toward the sixth stele, entered, and after the time it takes half an incense stick to burn, had yet another 1st place spot!

Everyone was so excited they felt like lightning bolts were crashing down all around. It had been a very, very long time since something like this had happened in the Nine Seas God World, something that set everyone's blood boiling.

Seventh stele, 1st place!

Eighth stele, 1st place!

Meng Hao went from one golden gate to another, and other than the fifth stele, which he wanted no part of, he took 1st place in all of them!

He was followed by a crowd of excited Nine Seas God World disciples. The Demonic cultivators were ashen-faced, their hearts filled with intense fear and shock regarding Meng Hao.

He... was the first person to have ever succeeded at doing something like this in the Nine Seas God World.

It was now a certainty that his name would be an eternal myth passed down through the history of the sect!

Finally, he appeared in front of the ninth golden gate stone stele. He came to a stop and stood there for a moment. Then, face solemn, he took a deep breath, and entered.

The moment he entered, the old man's voice echoed out to fill the entire world.

"Do you believe yourself to be qualified to gain the enlightenment of my third fist strike?"

"Absolutely!" Meng Hao replied immediately.

"Very well!" As the voice echoed out, the old man appeared out of thin air. He looked at Meng Hao, and his eyes shone with praise. He began to

walk forward, his voice booming.

“First fist, Life-Extermination Fist!

“After extermination, one’s own life must be sacrificed!

“After self-immolation, one can... slay Gods!

“My third fist strike is called... God-Slaying!” The old man’s voice thrummed with energy. He strode forward, and all of a sudden, it seemed like he was the world, and the world was him!

He neared, fist swinging. It looked like an ordinary punch, not as murderous as the Life-Extermination Fist, nor as domineering as the Self-Immolation Fist. It seemed simple. However, it also filled Meng Hao with an unprecedented sensation of deadly crisis.

It was as if this one punch could suck in the energy of the entire world, and transform that energy into the power... to slay Gods!

“What are Gods?!” As the fist closed in, the old man’s voice continued to echo out.

“Just another name some of the Outsiders call themselves. As for us from the Immortal World, we respect their power. Therefore, if they wish to call themselves Gods, then we approve!

“It is only because we approve of them that... killing them feels so wonderful!

“Remember, Immortals are above everything. And Gods... are like treasures to make ourselves stronger! In my lifetime, I slew 92 Gods. Eventually, I was killed, but my will remained behind in this stone stele, transformed into a soul of battle!” The God-Slaying Fist closed in.

Meng Hao was shaking, as he realized that he was completely incapable of blocking this fist strike. It was an entire world condensed into one fist. Despite the fact that his cultivation base was now vastly beyond his previous level, it was still impossible for him to resist it.

“Why... should I resist it?” Suddenly, his mind trembled as an idea formed. His eyes began to shine brightly, and instead of trying to block it,

he clenched his own hand into a fist and chose to imitate the old man. He decided... to unleash his own God-Slaying Fist!

The old man threw his head back and laughed. When his fist connected with Meng Hao's, all of the power of the world poured into Meng Hao. However, Meng Hao wasn't injured at all; instead, the power guided him to a new awareness. As the power poured into his fist, the world collapsed.

"Go, you have been enlightened!" The old man's smiling voice echoed out as the world vanished. When everything became clear again, Meng Hao was outside of the ninth golden gate stone stele.

Behind him, the name in the 1st place position, Zong Wuya... moved to 2nd place.

Meng Hao's name shone with boundless golden light as he moved to... 1st place!

*

1. Stars appeared on Wang Tengfei's forehead when he used the power of Gods to fight Meng Hao in chapter 990.
2. In the original Chinese there is a line here which says "she was rubbing/touching (something)" but doesn't say specifically what. I suspect it's a typo/oversight on the part of Er Gen, and I don't want to guess at the meaning. For example, "she was rubbing her temples" and "she was rubbing the corpse" would have very different implications.

Chapter 1083: Lord Fifth's Grand Ambition!

For years in the Ninth Mountain and Sea's Nine Seas God World, the most 1st place spots occupied by any one person was six. That person earned honor and glory that lasted for many years before fading. Even to this day, there was some trace of that glory left behind.

The single remaining trace was on the ranking list of the ninth golden gate stone stele. That person was the previous 1st place spot holder... Zong Wuya. A thousand years before, he had been the number one Chosen in the Nine Seas God World. Although he had become a legend, strangely, his name was not very well known in the outside world.

But now, Meng Hao had broken his record. He had eight 1st place spots, ensuring that everyone in the sect was shaken, from the cultivators watching everything that happened in person to those who were observing from afar in secluded meditation.

Conversations immediately broke out in the crowd.

"This makes me think of... Elder Brother Zong Wuya from all those years ago...."

"His performance was just as stunning and grand. So domineering...."

"Elder Brother Zong Wuya's achievements slowly faded away over a thousand years. As for Meng Hao's achievements... I wonder how many thousands of years will have to pass before he is surpassed... as 1st place on the ninth stele!"

As the buzz from the surrounding crowd continued to grow louder, Meng Hao took a deep breath, clasped hands, and bowed deeply to Granny Nine and the others. Then, he turned and shot off toward his Immortal's cave.

As Meng Hao left, he heard Granny Nine's transmitting into his ears: "Seven days. In seven days, the Windswept Realm will be opened.... Make your final preparations."

He stopped in place, then turned and bowed again, before finally vanishing.

Soon after, he appeared in his valley Immortal's cave, sinking down through the water.

Almost immediately, he heard shrill cries echoing about, which happened to be the excited squawks of the parrot.

"Listen up, it's inspection time! Look lively for Lord Fifth! Come, come. We sing on my mark! Lord Fifth's future happiness all depends on you!"

The meat jelly didn't want to be left behind, so it cried out: "And Lord Third too! Lord Third's future all depends on you!"

Meng Hao looked around, a strange expression on his face. The first thing he noticed was that the group of Demonic cultivators in the pool of water looked extremely gaunt and haggard. However, their expressions were that of mad piety, as if the parrot were truly a god to them.

Even more shocking was that Su Yan looked completely different than before. Her face was pale, and she looked dazed. Apparently, the ordeal of going through these days of indescribable torment had brought her willpower to the point of breaking. She looked like she was going through the motions on pure instinct.

The parrot gave a shout, and the singing began. Everyone belted out the song in harmony, maintaining a strange cadence. Despite having prepared himself mentally, as soon as Meng Hao heard the song, he could barely force himself to keep listening for more than a few seconds.

"I'm your little, dear little seafood dish! However you love me, it's never too much! I'm your little, dear little seafood dish! Seeeeaaaafoooooood DISH!" 1

The parrot looked around arrogantly, especially as the final verse was sung, and the pitch of the song rose up sharply. In the blink of an eye, the sky went dim, and a huge wind kicked up.

Meng Hao's eyes went wide as he stared at all of this happening. He took a deep breath, and was unable to stop himself from admiring the parrot

and meat jelly. He had handed over a troupe of hateful Demonic cultivators to the two dunces, and they had come back to him with an impassioned, fanatical singing group.

“STOP!” the parrot cried suddenly, flapping its wings to stop the singing. Not a peep could be heard from the singers. Meng Hao didn’t even dare to think about what they had experienced to cause them to behave so well.

“Look, bitches, don’t you remember what Lord Fifth told you!? You can’t sing that way! You have to have FEELING! You need to MOVE YOUR EYES!” Enraged, the parrot flew over to a sea turtle and began to beat it viciously with its wings.

“And YOU, you giant scallop! You need to shine! You hear me!? DAMMIT! You idiot!

“And the rest of you, what are you looking so happy for!? What the hell were you doing with that last verse, huh? What the hell? Lord Fifth wants the tone to rise. Do you understand? RISING TONE!”

After more enraged rebuking, the parrot finally flew over to Meng Hao, looking very apologetic, as if it had failed in its mission.

“Haowie, give Lord Fifth a bit more time. These morons don’t listen very well. In Lord Fifth’s opinion, if we try to sell them now, we’ll really sustain some heavy losses. Just leave them in my hands for a bit longer. Lord Fifth has a dream, and that dream is to have a really top-notch seafood song. I’m going to intensify the training immediately!

“The day will come when I take them out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. We’ll tour the entire Mountain and Sea Realm! We’ll travel through the starry sky! Their song will become the melody of all the Heavens!” Having found its new ambition, the parrot began to glow with bright light.

Meng Hao stared in shock. Before he could even say anything in response, the meat jelly jumped in.

“Hey, you old pigeon, why are you glowing all of a sudden?! Waahhhh! How’d you do that?! I want to glow!” It suddenly held its breath, causing its face to turn red. Then it let out a mighty bellow, after which... it suddenly

began to glow with bright light as well.

Meng Hao felt a headache coming on. He quickly nodded at the seemingly insane parrot, then hastily turned and flew toward his Immortal's cave. As he neared it, he could hear the voice of the meat jelly calling out in irritation.

"Listen, you crotchety pigeon, these seafood dishes are obedient thanks to Lord Third's contributions! Lord Third wants bullies! Lord Third wants these seafood dishes sold and exchanged for bullies! I must convert bullies!"

"Moron! How much do you think you could sell them for? Do you even have a brain? Well, do you? You can count, can't you!?"

"Lord Third has a brain! Lord Third's entire body is a brain!!"

When Meng Hao heard this, he cleared his throat and stepped into his Immortal's cave. Moments later, more angry bickering could be heard from the parrot.

"Moron! Fool! Idiot! These seafood dishes would only sell for a trifling sum! However, after they've completed Lord Fifth's training, we'll have an incredible singing group on our hands! Whatever place we go to, we can sell out huge concerts! Do you know how many spirit stones we can make? That's the best way to handle things long-term!"

"You mean like when Meng Hao got all those spirit stones when he went to the Medicine Pavilion in the Fang Clan?"

"Obviously! Except that Haowie doesn't count for bird crap. If he can do that, just imagine how much better Lord Fifth can do! I've already figured it all out. When the time comes, the two of us will be the lead singers. Even Haowie will have to come sing too. When I think of that image, I just get so excited! We need to think of a band name! Come on, start thinking of some ideas."

Meng Hao slipped into his Immortal's cave and waved his hand, sealing away the outside world. He truly had no further desire to listen to the parrot and meat jelly speaking to each other. As for the song... Meng Hao

believed that he would feel utmost admiration for anyone who could listen to the entire thing.

Although, if the parrot actually did succeed, and the seafood song got popular, maybe he would cooperate and sing with them... for the spirit stones.

He sat down cross-legged and patted his bag of holding. A beam of light immediately flew out, which was Chu Yuyan. As he lay her down in front of him, he noticed that her face was no longer pale, but had some color to it. She still wasn't awake, though.

He looked at her for a long time before finally sighing inwardly. Then he reached out and touched her forehead, sending cultivation base power into her, accelerating the process of dispelling the poison.

The heart-blood of ten Sea Dragons was definitely capable of dispelling the poison afflicting her. However, it wasn't capable of doing so very quickly. The process of cleansing her qi passageways was a slow one, in which the poison was constantly broken down and transformed into something beneficial to one's cultivation base.

After checking her thoroughly, he sat in thought for a moment, and then decided not to force the process to go any faster. Chu Yuyan's current state wasn't a harmful one to her, and in fact, could be viewed as a type of good fortune.

Actually, the Sea Dragon venom was both a venom and powerful tonic. With no antidote, it would be deadly. With the antidote, it was exactly the opposite.

"This catastrophe will actually help her to make a huge advancement in terms of her cultivation base, and bring her that much closer to the Immortal Realm." Eventually, he pulled his finger back, whereupon a tremor ran through Chu Yuyan. Her eyes opened slowly, and she looked blankly at Meng Hao. Then, her eyes went wide for a moment before she closed them again, as if she were thinking.

After a few breaths of time passed, she opened her eyes again, and they were clear and bright.

She seemed extremely calm, although her voice was a bit weak as she said, "Was it you that saved me? Thank you. What is this place?"

When he saw the expression on her face, he was silent for a moment before saying: "It was my fault you got dragged into this.... We're in the Nine Seas God World."

Then he proceeded to explain everything that had happened.

Chu Yuyan didn't speak. She merely listened quietly. From the look of it, she was in a very fragile state, and would only be able to stay awake for a short period of time.

After hearing the story, she smiled slightly, as if she had forgotten about everything that had occurred between the two of them in the past, and now thought of them as merely friends. She gave a nod of understanding, doing nothing to reveal what she might actually be thinking.

"I never imagined that after all these years, we would meet again like this."

Were it not for the words she had muttered back on Seajacket Island, Meng Hao would have had a hard time detecting that she was acting strangely. Now that he was looking for it, it was plain to see that she was putting on an act. Furthermore, within her slight smile could be seen a trace of both disappointment and pride.

Back on Planet South Heaven, she had made a decision. You have your glory, and I... I have my pride.

"It doesn't matter how it all happened," she said. "Thank you. I will remember the kindness you've shown. Maybe I won't ever be able to pay you back, but I won't forget." She struggled to her feet, then gave Meng Hao a curtsying bow.

Seeing Chu Yuyan act so politely toward him caused Meng Hao to sit there in quiet reticence.

"I've recovered," she said softly, "so... I'll take my leave now. You... take care of yourself." Supporting herself by leaning against the wall of the cave, she made to leave, but was too weak. After only a few steps, she

staggered, face pale, and began to fall over.

Sighing, Meng Hao reached out to steady her.

Biting her bottom lip, Chu Yuyan smiled and said, “Well don’t I look silly. I can walk, Meng Hao. Thank you.”

Brushing away his hand, she took a few steps forward, but then her body weakened, and she toppled over. Her forehead smacked into the stone wall, and because of the weakness of her body, and her lack of any of the protection of her cultivation base, it gashed her skin and blood began to flow.

She gaped in astonishment, and tears welled up in her eyes. She struggled to rise back to her feet, but couldn’t. Meng Hao stepped forward to help her.

“Thank you, but I can do it myself,” she said with a weak smile.

“Chu Yuyan!” Meng Hao growled, reaching down and helping her up.

*

1. This latest seafood song is a direct reference to one of the most popular songs in China in recent years. I feel like I hear this song at least every other day here in China, and it makes me want to rip my ears out, so from now on I’m going to sing Lord Fifth’s version of it!

Chapter 1084: The Path to the Windswept Realm!

Chu Yuyan trembled and took a deep breath. Then she turned slowly to look at Meng Hao and, summoning all the energy she could muster, said: “Let. Go. Of. Me!”

He frowned.

“What, can’t keep your hands off me?” she asked derisively. “Just like that year in the volcano?”

“You’re very weak right now,” he replied calmly, releasing her arm. “Don’t be so anxious to leave.”

“Thank you for saving me,” she said, her voice even weaker than before. “As for getting kidnapped, you don’t need to feel guilty about that. It’s not like you did it personally.” She tucked a strand of hair behind her ear and then slowly edged forward, keeping her hand planted firmly on the wall to support herself.

Meng Hao did nothing to stop her.

Just when she was almost at the exit, her weakness overwhelmed her. Her vision swam, and she lapsed into unconsciousness.

Meng Hao sighed, stepping forward and grabbing her before she could fall. He then laid her down on the ground and sat cross-legged off to the side, his expression complex.

The Immortal’s cave was very quiet, which allowed Meng Hao to do a lot of thinking. One by one, various scenes of events on Planet South Heaven played through his mind.

Time passed. Two days later, Chu Yuyan opened her eyes again. By now, she had recovered a lot of her energy, but was still weak. She struggled to her feet once again, but this time, didn’t mention anything about leaving. She sat down cross-legged, gazing blankly at nothing.

“Do you remember Han Bei?” Meng Hao suddenly asked.

Chu Yuyan didn't respond for a long time. Finally she turned and looked at Meng Hao with a slight frown.

"Who's Han Bei?"

Meng Hao's eyes widened. After a moment of thought, he said, "Han Bei, from Planet South Heaven. She was a disciple of the Black Sieve Sect, in the Southern Domain."

"Doesn't ring a bell," she said, looking at him, "I didn't have much contact with the Black Sieve Sect. Why?"

"Oh, nothing. I was just thinking of something that happened a while back." His face darkened as he realized that Chu Yuyan's answer didn't really help him much at all. After all... Chu Yuyan never really knew much about the Black Sieve Sect to begin with!

Therefore, it made sense that she might not know much about Han Bei. The fact that she didn't remember her now was a bit of a clue, but not true proof, nor much of an explanation about anything. After all, Chu Yuyan's position within the Violet Fate Sect had been far different than Han Bei's in the Black Sieve Sect.

It was even possible that she had never even heard of Han Bei, or if she had, never cared enough to take note of her.

Seeing that Meng Hao didn't want to discuss the matter further, Chu Yuyan didn't ask any questions. She closed her eyes to meditate. Right now, she knew that she didn't have the energy to leave; therefore, the best thing to do was to recover as quickly as possible. Then she could leave and return to her sect. She... didn't want to look at Meng Hao, which made it difficult to know how to interact with him. Every time she saw him, she felt unsettled.

In the days following her departure from Planet South Heaven, she had often asked herself what it was about Meng Hao that she actually liked. It couldn't just be that one incident in the volcano. Nor could it be all the things that had happened afterward. In the end, she couldn't find a good reason. She knew that she should hate him, but no matter how much she tried, it was as if... his image was burned into her heart. Sometimes it was

Fang Mu from the Violet Fate Sect, and sometimes it was Meng Hao. Sometimes it was both.

She couldn't get rid of those images. It was almost like some type of curse.

Chu Yuyan sighed, closed her eyes, and continued to meditate.

The Immortal's cave was once again silent. After a while, Meng Hao's eyes glimmered as various possibilities flickered through his mind.

"Maybe I'm just reading too much into it, but... the whole situation is very peculiar." After more thought, his eyes began to shine. Although the matter seemed relatively simple, the more he thought about it, the more complicated it got. He was finally convinced that there was definitely something extraordinary going on.

"The easiest way to discover the truth would be to just go back to Planet South Heaven. However... the Black Sieve Sect is long gone, and it would be hard to track down any survivors.

"Well, Qing'er was there. Once we're reunited, I can ask her and I'll know for sure. If Qing'er doesn't remember Han Bei either, then that means... there's definitely something very mysterious going on!"

Due to the imminent opening of the Windswept Realm, Meng Hao took the time to make various preparations. He used spirit-immortal stones on all of his black beetles, and even increased the number he fed them in order to speed up the process. In the days that passed, he sealed them away one by one into his bag of holding.

In addition to that, he was also maintaining the peak performance of his Immortal Emperor state. He was far, far stronger than before, and also had his newly empowered divine sense. Furthermore, because of all the trials and tribulations that he had experienced, his cultivation base had experienced explosive growth.

However, those were not his trump cards. His trump card was his Ancient Realm fleshly body, and the two ignited Soul Lamps in his eyes. Because of that, his battle prowess was vastly increased.

Another thing he did was organize his bag of holding. He wanted to make sure that he was thoroughly and completely prepared for the Windswept Realm. He also took out the half-burned incense stick that he had acquired along with the spirit-immortal stones. After examining it thoughtfully for a while, he carefully put it back into his bag of holding.

“I should be able to find an opportunity to absorb my second Nirvana Fruit in the Windswept Realm!” he thought, taking a deep breath.

Soon, seven days passed. At dawn, the toll of bells could be heard, filling the entire Nine Seas God World. Meng Hao’s eyes opened, and they shone brightly.

In the same moment that he opened his eyes, an ancient voice echoed in his ears. It was none other than Godmaster. “Meng Hao, the hour has arrived. Come to the mountain peak!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and rose to his feet. At the same time, he waved his hands, causing numerous bands of black light to fly toward him. In the end, more than fifty black pods landed on his palm, which he then put into his bag of holding.

He looked over at Chu Yuyan, who opened her eyes and looked back at him.

“Take good care of yourself,” she said softly.

Meng Hao nodded and walked to the door of the Immortal’s cave. There, he stopped.

“The place I’m going to is the shattered remnant of another world. The natural laws there are incomplete, which makes investigation of them that much easier. The venom inside you will dissipate within seven days, and your cultivation base will be restored....

“At that time, you will be on the very edge of the Immortal Realm, on the verge of a breakthrough!

“Because of the chaos of natural law in the place I’m going, it’s actually a very suitable place for Immortal Ascension. However, there are also many dangers there. Do you... want to come along?”

Chu Yuyan sat there quietly, expressions of confusion and reminiscence flashing across her face. After a long moment, her expression turned to one of resolve. She had suddenly recalled something told to her once.... by Pill Demon.

Work hard at cultivation. That way... one day, if you find you've lost everything, you will still have a Great dao with you.

Chu Yuyan looked up at Meng Hao and said, "Thank you. I'll go!"

He didn't respond. He waved his right sleeve, causing an incredible gravitational force to appear. Chu Yuyan didn't struggle; she allowed the power to pull her into Meng Hao's bag of holding.

Finally, Meng Hao turned and exited the Immortal's cave in a flash.

As soon as he appeared outside the door, he shot upward. As he did, he glanced down at the Demonic cultivators and Su Yan, then made a grasping motion, sealing them and pulling them into his bag of holding. "Parrot! Meat jelly! Let's go!"

The parrot gaped in astonishment, and the meat jelly looked flabbergasted.

"Go where?"

"The Windswept Realm!"

RUMBLE!

Meng Hao shot out of the water and flew up into the sky. The parrot and meat jelly transformed into beams of light that caught up and landed on Meng Hao's shoulder. The meat jelly was still blabbering.

"Windswept Realm? Where's that? What kind of place is it? I've never been there! How do we get there, huh? Hey, why aren't you saying anything?"

"Shut up! the parrot growled. Then it cleared its throat and was about to speak when Meng Hao interrupted: "There are bullies there. And also creatures with lots of fur and feathers." Instantly, the meat jelly grew very serious, and the parrot, very excited. The two ninnies exchanged glances,

then let out whoops of excitement.

Meng Hao flew over the lands of the sect at top speed. Soon, the same mountain peak where he had first met Granny Nine and Godmaster appeared up ahead.

The top of the mountain was covered with glittering white snow, just like before. However, there was also something new, a pillar of light rising up into the sky, shooting out of the sect, through the Ninth Sea, and up into the starry sky.

Next, six additional beams of light appeared from various locations in the Nine Seas God World, which also shot up into the sky. All of the Nine Seas God World's spell formations were activated, unleashing incredible power in all directions.

As he looked over the scene, Meng Hao was shocked to find that a Dao Realm Patriarch could be seen sitting cross-legged within each of the pillars of light. Granny Nine was there, as were Godmaster and Ling Yunzi. Even the two Demonic Patriarchs were there.

In total, seven pillars of light were shooting up into the starry sky. There, distortions could be seen as a huge rift opened up.

Simultaneously, all of the cultivators in the Nine Seas God World, including those of the Immortal Realm and Ancient Realm, sat cross-legged in meditation, organized into a massive spell formation.

As they unleashed the power of their cultivation bases, the energy of Heaven and Earth descended, which in turn caused the energy of the Nine Seas God World to erupt explosively. The energy poured into the seven pillars of light, causing them to shine even more resplendently.

Soon, the full power of the cultivation bases of all the Nine Seas God World disciples was being unleashed, including that of the Demonic cultivators. The entire sect trembled, and the land quaked. Suddenly, the entire land mass began to rise. Every inch that it rose caused the seven pillars of light to grow even stronger. Massive rumbling could be heard, and the rift up in the starry sky opened wider.

That rift was apparently... the path to the Windswept Realm!

The entire land mass rose higher and higher, faster and faster. Soon, it was rising hundreds of meters with every movement. Sea water cascaded down off of it.

Meng Hao was shaken as he stood there watching all of this happen, his eyes shining with anticipation of reaching the Windswept Realm!

“Other than the fact that half of the world crumbled away, and many natural laws changed, everything else is a perfectly preserved replica of... one of the Lower Realms of yesteryear!

“The Windswept Realm!” he murmured.

Chapter 1085: Arriving in the Windswept Realm!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Booms like thunder filled the Ninth Sea, echoing out powerfully in all directions. The waters boiled and roared, almost as if an awakening giant were about to burst out from under the surface!

That giant... was none other than the Nine Seas God World! It rose up, 300 meters, then 3,000 meters... in the space of a few breaths, massive rumbling filled the entire Ninth Sea as a huge land mass flew up into the air!

From a distance, it looked like a gigantic island, with seven beams of light shooting up from it. The light flew up into the starry sky, causing the rift up above to grow larger and larger.

At the same time, Fan Dong'er appeared near Meng Hao on the same mountain. She was also looking up into the sky, her expression that of nervousness... and excitement!

In addition to Fan Dong'er, there were three others, two men and a woman. They looked familiar to Meng Hao, and he quickly placed them as other Chosen disciples of the Nine Seas God World.

All of them were waiting with keen anticipation.

On the other side of the mountain, more figures appeared in quick succession. Bei Yu was one of them. She stepped out slowly, flanked by three other Demonic cultivators. All of them had profound cultivation bases. One of them, Meng Hao recognized; he was none other than the burly body cultivator he had fought not too long ago.

Obviously, when the Nine Seas God World opened the Windswept Realm, it would not just be Meng Hao entering by himself. All of these people would be joining him!

Meanwhile, similar scenes played out in the Eighth Sea. There, columns

of light rose up from the God World just like they had in the Ninth Sea, shooting up into the starry sky to open a huge rift. On the Eighth Sea, a huge continent appeared, upon which a group of eight people could be seen waiting in anticipation.

One of those people was extremely gaunt, and stood apart from the others. He was surrounded by countless swirling bones, and his eyes shone with a cold gleam as he smiled slightly.

“Windswept Realm. I should be able to kill to my heart’s content.”

It was the same in the Seventh Sea, the Sixth Sea, the Fifth Sea, and the Fourth Sea. As of this moment, huge land masses rose up from all of them, as well as towering columns of light which tore open rifts in the starry sky.

On the Fourth Sea, laughter rang out. A young man stood there, wearing a long black robe, laughing heartily. On his forehead, an Echelon mark could be seen, glittering brightly.

A brutally cold gleam could be seen in his eyes, and as the rift in the starry sky slowly opened up, his laughter grew louder.

Countless people stood respectfully in front of him, showing incredible reverence.

By this point, each and every member of the Echelon could be seen on the surfaces of the Seas in their respective corners of the Mountain and Sea Realm. All of them were waiting... for the Windswept Realm to open. All of these people were Chosen, and any one of them could be considered similar to Meng Hao. To the other Chosen from their parts of the Mountain and Sea Realm, they were seemingly impassable mountains.

Now, all of these mountain-like figures were going to convene in the Windswept Realm, which would be the location... of the Echelon battles!

Some Echelon members had already clashed on numerous occasions. However, for Meng Hao, this would be his first time... encountering any of them!

Echelon battles were battles of life and death. They were not expressions of mere friction between members, but a method of determining... who

was the most powerful among them!

As for all of the other people who entered the Windswept Realm with the Echelon, they were secondary, mere adornments really. Of course, if they were qualified, it wouldn't necessarily be impossible... for them to kill one of the Echelon members and even steal a place in the Echelon itself!

A young woman flew through the air near the Third Mountain. She wore a long, white garment, and was so immaculately beautiful that she could cause all other life forms to dim in comparison.

This was the same woman who had been playing Go with the young Echelon member from the First Mountain. She had left to search for Meng Hao after sensing his presence, hoping to play a game of Go with him and discuss the Dao. She was the Immortal Ancient successor, Xue'er! 1

She suddenly stopped in place and turned her head. A beautiful smile could be seen on her face, and all of a sudden, the entire world, even the entire starry sky, seemed to shine brightly.

"Looks like I can save a lot of energy and not go all the way to the Ninth Mountain," she thought. "I'll just look for him in the Windswept Realm." Smiling, she headed toward the Third Sea.

She was not in the Echelon, but she was someone... who any Echelon member would view as extremely important!

In fact, anyone who could obtain her assistance would assuredly grow much more powerful than the others, and would make much more progress on the path of the Echelon. In fact, their chances of final success... would be even greater!

All of the great Seas in the Mountain and Sea Realm were boiling and roaring. Rifts opened up in the starry sky, growing larger by the moment. If there was a position in the Mountain and Sea Realm that enabled you to see all of the various starry skies, then you would be able to see that...

The rifts above all of the Nine Seas of the Mountain and Sea Realm formed a straight line. However, currently it was as if that line had been cut into nine segments, which were beginning to stretch out across their

respective mountains and seas. It was obvious that soon those lines would join together to form a path... a huge rift connecting together through the entire Mountain and Sea Realm!

At that time... the Windswept Realm would be completely opened.

Everyone was waiting in anticipation.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes glittered brightly. He could also sense that each and every one of the other Echelon members in the other Mountains and Seas was waiting just as he was.

It was at this point that Godmaster's voice rang out over the Ninth Sea: "The will of the Ninth Sea accepts the orders once set down by Paragon Sea Dream. Let the Ninth Sea's will... open the Windswept Door!"

Instantly, the Ninth Sea began to rumble. Huge waves surged back and forth as a sword began to rise up out of the water. It was completely formed of seawater, and in the blink of an eye, it flew up into the sky with shocking speed.

This was a sword that seemed capable of exterminating all life.

Almost in the same moment that the sword appeared, it shot toward the starry sky, where it slashed at the rift. The entire world trembled, and cracking sounds echoed out, causing the minds of all onlookers to tremble. A huge rumbling sound could be heard as the rift suddenly tore open, ripping directly toward the Eighth Mountain.

It almost looked like the starry sky was shattering. It was an assault on the eyes, causing everyone who saw it to be shaken to the verge of madness.

Simultaneously, above the Eighth Sea, countless cultivators watched as the rift from the Ninth Mountain and Sea ripped toward them. In the blink of an eye, it merged with the rift above the Eighth Mountain, whereupon a huge blade shot out from the Eighth Sea up toward the starry sky and ripped it open further!

Rumbling could be heard as the force from the blade caused the rift to rip open toward the Seventh Sea. Next, a huge pagoda flew up from the

Seventh Sea, causing the rift to rip toward the Sixth Sea....

It was like a cycle. It continued on to the Fifth Sea, the Fourth Sea, the Third Sea... until the very end, when the huge rift merged with the rift above the First Sea, creating one gargantuan rift above the Mountain and Sea Realm.

In the moment that the rift opened, Meng Hao and all of the others trembled violently and felt their hearts pounding. They all knew full well that their destination was not a place in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

This trial by fire involved leaving the Mountain and Sea Realm, and going to one of the former Lower Realms!

For Meng Hao, this feeling was completely different than the feeling he had experienced when leaving Planet South Heaven and heading toward Planet East Victory.

Godmaster's archaic voice echoed out again: "The hour has arrived. Meng Hao... it is time to leave!

"Keep in mind, you will not be the only disciple going to the Windswept Realm. There will also be cultivators from the other Eight Seas. Remember, the only person you can rely upon... is yourself!

"Even more importantly, remember that the World Essence lies in the central region of the Windswept Realm. That is what you must acquire!

"Whoever acquires the World Essence will be the victor of this trial by fire. It is only then that the great door back to the Mountain and Sea Realm will appear and you will be able to return!

"When in the Windswept Realm, you must rely on yourself, but, you will also have the support of your fellow sect members. Whatever past grievances or grudges existed will no longer apply in the Windswept Realm. I don't care what you do to each other after you get back, even if you start fighting immediately afterwards!

"However, in the Windswept Realm, the most important thing... is that you work together!"

Suddenly, Godmaster waved his sleeve, causing a bag of holding to fly out toward Meng Hao. Inside that bag of holding was the 300,000,000 Immortal jades he had won from the Demonic Cultivator Horde!

It was at this point that one of the two Patriarchs from the Demonic Cultivator Horde spoke:

“All of you, take heed. While you are in the Windswept Realm, forget about past matters. The most important thing is to work as a team!”

After the words echoed out, Godmaster spoke into Meng Hao’s mind.

“After you get to the Windswept Realm, it’s up to you whether or not to kill the Demonic cultivators. Don’t think that the things you have experienced recently are unique to the Ninth Sea. All of the other members of the Echelon from the other Seas have experienced similar dangers!”

Similar provocative words were spoken into the ears of the Demonic cultivators.

Rumbling could be heard as Meng Hao suddenly shot up into the air. He was followed by Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu, plus the three ordinary cultivators and the three Demonic cultivators. In total, nine streaks of colorful light shot up into the rift in the starry sky.

As they neared, a powerful gravitational force appeared, which grabbed ahold of them and pulled them into the pitch black of the rift.

Streaks of light could also be seen above the Eighth Sea, the Seventh Sea... all the way to the First Sea. In each and every case, there were nine people, no more, no less.

The only exception was in the Third Sea, where the young woman Xue’er joined the group, bringing their numbers to a total of ten.

All in all, 82 cultivators shot into the rift.

Of that entire group, Meng Hao was the first to enter!

In this instance, it was the Ninth Sea which had opened the Windswept Realm, and Meng Hao was the most qualified from that location. As such,

he was the first cultivator to enter the Windswept Realm.

He was in the lead, surrounded by boundless darkness. However, a wind could be felt, a wind which grew stronger and stronger. Eventually, it was like a windstorm which swept about in all directions.

Within that windstorm, Meng Hao could see countless corpses and ruins. It looked like the remains of a battlefield, from which he could sense how terrifying the war had been which destroyed all these things.

It was even more shocking than the Ruins of Immortality!

Suddenly, an enormous gravitational force appeared within the windstorm, grabbing Meng Hao, Fan Dong'er and the others, and pulling them forward.

Up ahead was a rift that bore a strong semblance to a spell formation. It was filled with an ancient aura, making it impossible to determine how long the spell formation had stood there, surrounded by the wreckage of war.

There was no time to examine his surroundings. Despite having seen the glow of magical treasures in the surrounding ruins, Meng Hao didn't have a chance to grab any of them. He and the others from the Ninth Sea shot toward the spell formation rift, and were instantly sucked in.

In that moment, they were suddenly swept across the void and into a strange world.

Before any of them could even see clearly, Meng Hao heard trembling, awe-struck voices echoing out around him.

“We respectfully welcome all Exalted Immortals!”

*

Note from Deathblade: Er Gen included an interesting note with this chapter. He mentioned that the release of this chapter marked his birthday “as listed on his identity card.” He points out that he usually celebrates his birthday according to the lunar calendar, not the Gregorian (solar) calendar. Madam Deathblade and many Chinese people do the

same thing. Tracking the lunar birthday means that the birthday falls on a different calendar day every year when using the Jan-Dec calendar that most of us do.

*

1. Xue'er was introduced in chapter 1058. Oddly, this is chapter 1085.

Chapter 1086: Desire in the Windswept Realm!

The Windswept Realm!

Once one of the 3,000 Lower Realms, it was called the garden of the Immortal World, and was regarded as one of the one hundred most important Realms!

Many, many cultivators appeared here who eventually ascended to the Immortal World, where they occupied numerous positions of Immortal authority. In fact, there was even an Imperial Lord who had arisen from there!

An Imperial Lord was a venerable stage that existed between the Dao Realm and the Paragon Realm!

That was in the heyday of the Windswept Realm, when it was filled with countless lands and seas, and experienced an endless baptism from the Immortal River of the Paragon Immortal Realm.

Back then, the Windswept Realm was even called Little Immortal World. Its skies were bright blue, touched with occasional Immortal Rain that virtually bathed the life forms of the lands in an Immortal will.

The enormous Immortal River in its sky was like a waterfall that fell down onto the lands below, causing an endless wind to gust. That wind would catalyze the life force flames of all living things, making the place extremely suitable for cultivation. Even mortals who lived there had extremely long lives, and it was not uncommon for them to live longer than two sixty-year-cycles.

That was how the Windswept Realm got its name.

To the cultivators of the Windswept Realm, the Paragon Immortal Realm was a fear-inspiring place. They were both inspired by its power, and at the same time, feared it. They showed extreme respect to any Immortal who descended from the Paragon Immortal Realm. To them, even the slightest word uttered by an Immortal was something of

profound importance. In fact, any expression or tone of voice that could cause displeasure to an Immortal was not tolerated in the Windswept Realm.

Of course, not all Immortals were so easily displeased. Most Immortals were revered, but not intensely feared. After all, the Windswept Realm had existed for an eternity, and many Patriarchs or other members of the various sects or clans there eventually ascended to the Immortal World.

Unfortunately, all of that changed during the great catastrophe. The Windswept Realm as a whole collapsed, and more than half of its lands were lost, as if they had been swallowed up by some great beast. The fires of war swept about, and as a result, it no longer seemed like a celestial paradise, but rather, was reduced to ruins.

Most importantly of all, the Immortal River was cut off. Like the other Realms, the Windswept Realm was cut off, leaving it in isolation. As the years went by, the world slowly recovered, but that obstacle always remained.

Therefore, the people of the Windswept Realm were unaware of everything happening outside of their world. They thought that the Paragon Immortal Realm was still as eternally powerful as ever. Therefore, any Immortal who visited their Realm was met with a deferential respect that was ingrained in their blood, and was as strong as ever.

Furthermore... it had been a very, very long time since anyone from the Windswept Realm had ascended to the Immortal World. That led to hesitation on their part. As for their cultivation bases, they were limited to the Cauldron Seeking stage, making it impossible for them advance further into Immortal Ascension, which would make it possible for them to leave their world. 1

Because of all of that, any Immortal who arrived was treated with incredible respect, and was even feared. It also caused the cultivators of the Windswept Realm to thirst for the good fortune which might be available from the Immortals.... Therefore, to the people of this generation of the Windswept Realm, the recently arrived cultivators from the

Mountain and Sea Realm... were like deities!

Meng Hao and Fan Dong'er, as well as the other three ordinary cultivators, plus Bei Yu and the three Demonic cultivators, all arrived in the southeastern region of the Windswept Realm, in the middle of a desert.

Rolling sands spread out in all directions, and the heat was so intense that it caused everyone to sweat profusely. Despite that, there were nearly ten thousand cultivators present, packed together tightly, prostrated on the ground in the shape of a spell formation.

There was no attacking power built into this spell formation; it was merely ceremonial, a show of respect.

It was made of men and women, children and old folks. They all prostrated on hands and knees, their expressions that of awe and reverence. Their heads were bowed, and not a single one dared to look up.

In the middle of this group of people was a huge altar, covered with numerous carvings that emanated what seemed like an eternal, untouchable power.

As of this moment, nine beams of light could be seen illuminating the sky as they shot down toward the altar, which let out rumbling booms. All of the magical symbols on the altar began to shine and glow, as if to receive the incoming guests.

The rumbling sounds grew more intense, and the surrounding cultivators began to tremble even harder. None of them dared to even lift their heads. One of them, an old man who was located in the ring of cultivators closest to the altar, called out in a loud voice:

“We respectfully welcome all the Exalted Immortals!”

His words echoed out for the time it takes about ten breaths of time, after which, brilliant pillars of light shot up from the altar to connect to them. Then the light slowly faded away to reveal... nine cultivators!

Meng Hao was one of them. All of the people from the Nine Seas God World shone with golden light, making them look completely sacred and

inviolable. Furthermore, because their cultivation bases vastly exceeded that of the cultivators of the Windswept Realm, they emanated incredible pressure which pushed down on the surrounding crowd and caused them to tremble.

Meng Hao looked out of sorts for a brief moment before recovering. His eyes swept about, taking in the altar they were standing on, and the more than 10,000 cultivators prostrated respectfully. He also saw that past the cultivators were even more people, tens of thousands all prostrated on the ground, not daring to lift their heads.

Up in front of those tens of thousands of people was a middle-aged man wearing an Imperial robe. He was also trembling as he prostrated himself. From the look of it, he was the emperor of this region or nation.

Neither Meng Hao, nor the others with him, were used to having such a large group of people prostrating in deference.

The old man who stood among the 10,000 cultivators was the first one to lift his head and look at Meng Hao and the other eight. He seemed incredibly ancient, as if he had lived for countless years. However, his cultivation base was only at the Cauldron Seeking stage.

“Exalted Immortals,” he said, “it is the inestimable honor of our Ninth Nation to welcome you here today! It has been over a thousand years since any Immortal has arrived here to bestow good fortune. Please accept the worship of our Ninth Nation’s seven great sects and three great clans!”

Behind him were ten old men, who were apparently the Patriarchs of the sects and clans he had just mentioned. They radiated respect as they slowly raised their heads to look at Meng Hao and the others, whereupon they once again bowed in worship.

“I am your servant Jian Daozi,” said the oldest of the old men, the first one to speak. “Exalted Immortals, now that you have descended to our Lower Realm, anything you need or want will be provided to you. We will do anything in our power to satisfy your every desire!” His eyes burned with passion as his voice rang out. 2 3

“If we asked all of you to end your own lives, would you?” asked one of

the Demonic cultivators standing with Bei Yu, his voice cold.

Meng Hao frowned in response to his words, and even Bei Yu looked displeased.

However, the old man named Jian Daozi didn't hesitate for even a moment.

"Unless another of the Exalted Immortals interfered, all you would have to do would be to speak the word!"

The Demonic cultivator hesitated for a moment. However, both Meng Hao and Fan Dong'er, as well as all of the others, could hear the decisiveness and resolve in Jian Daozi's words, as well as the fanatical passion.

It wasn't just him who had such an attitude, all of the old men, and apparently all of the other cultivators... were exactly the same. Although not every single individual appeared to be madly fanatical, the reverence that shone in their eyes, the type that an inferior person would show toward a superior, caused Meng Hao's heart to tremble.

All of a sudden, a young cultivator among the crowd couldn't seem to hold back any longer, and lifted his head to look at Meng Hao and the other eight. When his eyes fell upon Bei Yu and Fan Dong'er, the youth seemed to be struck breathless.

Almost in the same instant that the young man looked up, the aged Jian Daozi's face flickered with anger. Similar looks appeared on the faces of all of the other old men.

"How dare you!!" roared Jian Daozi.

The young man's face went ashen, and a look of panic appeared on his face. He quickly bowed his head, but it was too late.

"Blasphemy against deities is a violation of the laws of the Windswept Realm!" Jian Daozi said coldly. He waved his finger toward the young man, causing a stream of air to slam into his forehead. The young man trembled and then died instantly.

This caused Meng Hao's eyes to widen. Everyone else stared in shock.

However, that simple action didn't finish things. One of the ten old men behind Jian Daozi immediately raised his right arm into the air and severed it. His face was pale white as he lifted his severed arm into the air and dropped to his knees.

"That young man was a member of my humble sect," he said. "I did not instruct him well, and am thus implicitly involved. I hope my severed arm will lessen the wrath of the Exalted Immortals!"

Bei Yu was panting, and Fan Dong'er was completely shaken. Meng Hao stared in shock at everything that had happened. Even his willpower was rocked by the behavior of these people of the Windswept Realm.

The feeling was indescribable, as if, in the briefest of moments... they had all suddenly turned into true Paragons!

It would be impossible for them to experience such a feeling in the Mountain and Sea Realm, because there would always be cultivators above them who were far more powerful. Although the number of such higher powers was nothing compared to the people who were weaker than them, the Mountain and Sea Realm was simply too vast a place.

The Mountain and Sea Realm had its rules and etiquette, which were like layer upon layer of nets that entangled everyone. Such things formed natural law that didn't permit unbridled actions.

However, the Windswept Realm was not only cut off from any other Realm, the highest cultivation bases there were not even in the Immortal Realm. Therefore, Meng Hao and the other eight... really and truly were deities!

Power, wealth, and anything else they desired... could be had by merely asking!

If it was wealth, a single sentence could cause the riches of an entire nation to be handed over!

If it was power, then in an instant, they could be crowned an emperor!

Wherever they went in the Ninth Nation, if they fancied someone, they could take that person away at any time. They could do exactly as they pleased, and the people below them would not only be incapable of refusing to comply, they would actually feel honored to serve.

This was true from the moment they arrived. Something as astonishing as this caused the minds of Meng Hao and the others to reel. Finally, they were able to experience... what it was like.. to be completely unconstrained by any rules or customs.

In this place, they made the rules!

At this moment, similar scenes were playing out in all of the other districts of the Windswept Realm. Everyone who had arrived was shaken to the core!

The Echelon members and other cultivators from the Nine Seas of the Mountain and Sea Realm all went to different locations. However, each and every one of those locations belonged... solely to those people who occupied it.

In total, the Windswept Realm had nine nations; therefore, each of the Nine Seas occupied one of those nations.

In the center of the nine nations was the location of the World Essence, an ancient temple.... That was the goal of all of the people who had just arrived.

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1. “Cauldron Seeking” is a stage in Er Gen’s other two novels, Beseech the Devil and Renegade Immortal. In terms of cultivation, it’s on almost exactly the same level as Dao Seeking, in other words, the last stage (or part of the last stage) before reaching the next Realm. “Cauldron Seeking” might not be the best translation for the other novels, but here I’m going with the most literal translation to make it sync well with I Shall Seal the Heavens.
2. Jian Daozi’s name in Chinese is 剑道子 jiàn dào zi. Jian is a surname

which is also the character for “sword.” Daozi is what often gets translated as “Dao Child”.

3. What I’m translating as Exalted Immortals could just be an honorific title to use when addressing Immortals. However, it was also a cultivation stage in Renegade Immortal.

Chapter 1087: Eradication!

The Windswept Realm had nine regions, which were occupied by the Nine Nations. All of them together formed a huge ring shape.

In the center of the ring created by the Nine Nations was... the temple!

Between each of the nations was a massive windstorm that stretched from the sky down to the land, keeping all of the Nine Nations separated, and making passage between them very difficult.

Because of the windstorm barrier, the Nine Nations were essentially sealed. Only the Cauldron Seeking cultivators could pierce through, and even then, it required a steep price.

The barriers acted like a protection, allowing the Nine Nations to slowly grow and become more powerful.

But now that the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm had arrived, the barriers separating the Nine Nations were trembling, and the eternal winds were showing signs of dissipating.

Currently, Meng Hao stood on the altar in the desert of the Ninth Nation, heart thumping. He watched as the young man was executed for simply looking up, and then saw the old man sever his own arm. The old man acted with complete decisiveness, such that blood was still spurting out of the wound as he dropped to his knees in worship.

Apparently... unless one of the Exalted Immortals spoke, the man would not stop the blood from flowing.

Fan Dong'er was inwardly shaken, as was Bei Yu. The other ordinary cultivators and Demonic cultivators had similar reactions. They... could count as nothing more than the Junior generation in the cultivation world, and had not seen or experienced all the trials and tribulations that the old-timers had. The shocking scene left Fan Dong'er and the others mentally shaken.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment before waving his right finger. A medicinal pill flew out and landed on the stump of the old man's

severed arm. In the blink of an eye, the wound healed, and the missing arm gradually began to grow back.

The old man trembled as he looked appreciatively at Meng Hao. Inwardly, he sighed with relief, and then once again bowed deeply.

“Many thanks, Exalted Immortal!”

The oldest man among all of the Windswept Realm’s cultivators was Jian Daozi. Wisdom flickered deep within his eyes as he casually turned to look over at Meng Hao. Then he clasped hands and said, “Exalted Immortals, we invite you to enter the temporary Imperial residences we have set up here in the Ninth Nation. Exalted Immortals... do you plan to reside together, or... live separately?”

As he finished speaking, he waved his hand, causing glittering light to rise up from the ground in front of him. Shockingly, a map of the entire Ninth Nation suddenly appeared.

The various areas on the map were clearly labeled to indicate which ones had spiritual energy, and which ones had abundant cultivation resources. All locations that were suitable for habitation by cultivators were clearly marked.

Furthermore, the various advantages and disadvantages of each location were explained clearly.

In the very center of the Ninth Nation, not too far from its capital city, was a mountain, half of which was covered with snow, and at the foot of which could be seen a lake. Furthermore, it was possible to see that much of the vital energy of the Ninth Nation at a whole was gathered there.

In addition to that mountain, there were two other locations which could be considered superb. As for the others, most were ordinary in nature.

After glancing over the map, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered almost imperceptibly, and he looked back at Jian Daozi. Once again, he was able to perceive the wisdom and foresight which the old man possessed.

To Jian Daozi and the other cultivators, Meng Hao and his companions were all Exalted Immortals. Although they venerated all of them, it was

impossible for them to determine which of the nine... maintained the most superior position.

Not only did they have no way of ascertaining such matters on their own, they could not afford to make any mistakes. If there were any misunderstandings about the seniority of the visitors from the Mountain and Sea Realm, it could lead to dire consequences. This map, and the process by which the Immortals dealt with it, would be one way to get some instant clues.

Fan Dong'er looked over the map, then glanced at Meng Hao. Afterward, she extended her right hand and pointed at one of the two lesser areas, opting not to take the most optimal location, the mountain with the National Fate.

Bei Yu hesitated for a moment, then subconsciously looked over at Meng Hao. Her eyes glowed for a moment, and she didn't immediately make a decision.

The other three ordinary cultivators with Fan Dong'er were well-aware of their place, and picked other locations. However, with the exception of the burly body cultivator, the other Demonic cultivators looked at the map with glittering eyes. They edged slowly over to Bei Yu's side, then looked over coldly at Meng Hao, as if they were itching for a fight.

This scene immediately revealed how much friction existed between them, something that Jian Daozi and the others instantly picked up on.

Fan Dong'er said nothing. She backed up a few paces, unwilling to get involved. The other three ordinary cultivators hesitated for a moment before also backing up, apparently maintaining neutrality as they tried to ignore the increasing tension building up between Meng Hao and the Demonic cultivators.

The burly Demonic body cultivator seemed to be inwardly conflicted. He gritted his teeth hard before giving an angry glance at the other Demonic cultivators and then backing off. He, too, chose not to get involved. He was already... incredibly frightened of Meng Hao.

Among the nine new arrivals, five chose to remain neutral. Three

Demonic cultivators remained behind, including Bei Yu, all of whom glared murderously at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, although inwardly, he maintained vigilance. These three Demonic cultivators obviously knew exactly how powerful he was, and yet they still were brave enough to bare their teeth. That indicated... that they were confident enough to go up against him, and were obviously... completely prepared.

Jian Daozi and the others watched what was happening with calm expressions. However, inwardly, they already had an answer to their original questions, causing their eyes to flicker toward Meng Hao.

Although Meng Hao didn't look like anything particularly special when compared with the others in his group, everyone's actions clearly showed his position and status.

"My Demonic Cultivator Horde has taken a liking to that mountain," Bei Yu suddenly said. She pointed at the mountain with the collection of vital qi.

Anyone could look at that mountain and tell that it possessed National Aura. Furthermore, that was obviously the best place to practice cultivation, and most likely the optimal location to gain enlightenment regarding the Windswept Realm.

"What a coincidence," replied Meng Hao, smiling. "I happened to take a liking to the same mountain." Although he was smiling, it was a cold smile. He had done nothing to cause any problems with the Demonic cultivators; they took the initiative to provoke him. Although they might have their trump cards, Meng Hao didn't mind showing them that no matter how powerful their secret weapons were, he could still sweep over them.

If he was willing to make a huge scene in the Nine Seas God World, then here, in a place like the Windswept Realm, with no rules or limitations, he would act even more flamboyantly!

Killing intent flickered in Bei Yu's eyes, and the two Demonic cultivators flanking her smiled coldly. They were just about to step forward when all

of a sudden... Meng Hao's expression flickered. He backed up a few steps and looked up into the sky, apparently too busy to pay any attention to Bei Yu and the others. Fan Dong'er and all the other cultivators also seemed to sense something, and also looked up. The two Demonic cultivators' faces flickered with confusion, and they ceased any attacks as they looked up into the sky.

In almost the exact same moment that they looked up, an indescribable pressure suddenly exploded downward, crushing down onto everything with destructive force. The entire land quivered, as if the whole Realm were trembling.

The aura seemed to be weighing down from the sky, but in fact, that was not the case. It was actually coming... from the very center of the Windswept Realm, from... the Windswept Realm's temple!

That temple contained the World Essence of the Windswept Realm, and as of this moment, the arrival of all of these people was causing an eruption of that very aura. That eruption was weakening the barriers between the Nine Nations to the point of collapse, and at the same time, was causing a very strange aura to fill the entire world.

The wind was growing stronger, and the sun in the sky was changing color. The plants were swaying back and forth, and the animals of the Windswept Realm were howling into the sky.

Numerous fissures snaked across the sky, only to rapidly close again. Apparently, a natural law that was originally difficult to detect... was suddenly awakened by the arrival of Meng Hao and the others.

"That's... Essence!!"

"I can sense Essence aura!!"

"This is the true Windswept Realm! I was wondering earlier why I didn't sense much of anything different after arriving here!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he sensed the natural law of the world. He closed his eyes, and felt as if he could feel Essence itself.

That feeling was completely unprecedented. It almost seemed like all he

had to do was reach his hand out to acquire the Essence. It was like the single move of a hand could cause ripples in the natural laws. If you likened the Mountain and Sea Realm to a solid wall, blocking everything, then the Windswept Realm... was like a net, full of holes. Because of all of those holes, the natural laws and Essence were easily visible to everyone present.

Of course, anyone whose cultivation base was not in the Immortal Realm... would be unable to detect these things!

At the same time that the World Essence of the Windswept Realm erupted, intense pressure swept out over the entire world. The pressure weighed down almost as if the entire world had been submerged at the bottom of the sea.

Thankfully, all of the people who came here from the Nine Seas God World were used to such pressure. Despite its intensity, it didn't affect them very much, Meng Hao included.

However, Meng Hao was also aware that were it not for the three months he had spent acclimating himself to the Nine Seas God World, then he would only be able to utilize a small portion of his cultivation base.

As the pressure rose, and the vast power of natural law and Essence revealed itself, the Immortal's caves that were the temporary Imperial residences in the Ninth Nation, all began to change.

That was especially true of the mountain which possessed National Aura. As of this moment, it seemed to transform into a Golden Dragon. Apparently... that mountain was the center of all of the natural law and Essence of the Ninth Nation!

Gradually, a windstorm began to build up around the mountain. Thunder boomed as the winds swept about. Anyone could sense that this mountain was extraordinary, and that if you practiced cultivation there, the benefits would be extreme.

Earlier, Meng Hao hadn't been dead set on acquiring that mountain. But now, it was something he had to have. Eyes flickering, he looked over at

Jian Daozi, and noticed that a very faint smile could be seen on his face.

“What a cunning old fox!” he thought. Meng Hao didn’t mind. Without sufficient intelligence and wisdom, the weak could never survive for long in the cultivation world.

Many times, the ability to scheme was the greatest type of power.

“There’s something else fishy going on,” he thought. “It would be far too simplistic if Jian Daozi’s scheming were limited to this.” As Meng Hao stood there thinking, Bei Yu and the other two Demonic cultivators exploded with killing intent, and began to close in on Meng Hao.

However, it was in that exact moment that, all of a sudden, a clap of thunder could be heard. The sky exploded, and Meng Hao’s face flickered as he suddenly sensed Chu Yuyan, Su Yan, and all of the Demonic cultivators in his bag of holding, spit up blood!

“NINE!! Nine is the limit!” a voice rang out. “Every Sea can send nine people into the Windswept Realm!!

“Anyone who exceeds that number cannot stay in the Windswept Realm, and will be wiped out!!”

Instantly, Meng Hao understood.

Chapter 1088: The First Death in the Windswept Realm!

In the moment that Meng Hao's face flickered, the same reaction could be seen on the faces of Fan Dong'er and her group of cultivators, as well as Bei Yu and the Demonic cultivators who had been roiling with killing intent.

Only the burly body cultivator's expression was the same as ever, as if he hadn't even noticed anything. Everyone else, on the other hand, could sense reactions from things within their bags of holding.

Furthermore, a shining red sealing mark appeared on the hands of all nine of them, marks that seemed to indicate that they possessed certain qualifications.

"Dammit!!" Fan Dong'er had an extremely unsightly look on her face, as did all the others. The two Demonic cultivators were no longer even thinking about Meng Hao. They stopped in place and used every possible method available to brace themselves for what was about to come.

Obviously... Meng Hao was not the only other person to have brought others with him into the Windswept Realm!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered and he backed up a few steps. He sent some divine will into his bag of holding and quickly sealed the Demonic cultivators who the parrot and meat jelly had been training to sing.

However, despite being sealed, when the second clap of thunder rang out, the Demonic cultivators coughed up more blood, and their bodies withered. Obviously, the sealing did no good. Thankfully, the parrot and meat jelly were not affected at all.

Meng Hao frowned as the third clap of thunder rang out. This time, he unleashed the Life Death Hexing!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

In the blink of an eye, the Demonic cultivators inside of his bag of

holding were protected by the Hexing magic. Although their faces went pale, they were unaffected, and were not in danger of being wiped out.

However... Chu Yuyan and Su Yan had nowhere to flee to. The two women coughed up blood, especially Chu Yuyan, who was already injured. Despite being more than half recovered, she was now on the verge of being exterminated by the thunder. Her injuries were aggravated, and the Life Death Hexing could not be used on her or Su Yan. After all, if Meng Hao used it, and failed... they would be killed, and he would be powerless to do anything about it!

Su Yan wouldn't be too big a loss, and Meng Hao didn't really care much about her, anyway. However, he couldn't simply risk Chu Yuyan in that way.

Everyone else had reactions to Meng Hao. Fan Dong'er's face was pale white as she slapped her bag of holding. Two people flew out, both of them young men who wore looks of surprise and shock on their faces.

As for the three cultivators behind Fan Dong'er, they all slapped their bags of holding; in total, they had brought eight people with them, all of them disciples of the Nine Seas God World!

It was the same with Bei Yu, from whose bag of holding flew two old women. Both were Demonic cultivators, with cultivation bases in the Ancient Realm, with five extinguished Soul Lamps each.

As for the other two Demonic cultivators, five people emerged to stand next to them.

At a single glance, you could see that the current group vastly exceeded the limit of nine. However, there was one aspect which was shared by all of the newcomers. None of their cultivation bases... exceeded five extinguished Soul Lamps!

Perhaps their true cultivation bases were higher than that, but at the moment, they had suppressed themselves down to the Ancient Realm with five extinguished Soul Lamps. That made it such that a single peal of thunder was strong enough to wipe them out!

“What’s going on!? The natural laws here are different than last time! Before, we could always bring extra people, as long as they had five extinguished Soul Lamps or fewer!!”

“As long as we didn’t bring too many, the Windswept Realm would never cause any interference. Why are things different this time!?”

As everyone cried out in alarm, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. He had never imagined that virtually everyone would try to bring more people into the Windswept Realm. Granny Nine and the others hadn’t mentioned anything about the subject, nor had they provided any warnings. After a moment of thought, Meng Hao realized he had nothing to complain about.

“I’m an outsider to the Nine Seas God World,” he thought, “and everything that has happened has been for the sake of mutual gain. They need my Echelon status, and I... need that status to get more powerful.

“To prevent me from bringing a bunch of my own clan members in here, they didn’t mention the subject, which I suppose is fair play.” As he backed up, he frowned. Although he could ignore the actions of the Nine Seas God World, he was getting very nervous because of the threat to Chu Yuyan.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he looked at the mark on the back of his hand, and he instantly understood the situation.

“Nine is the limit... well in that case... as long as we don’t exceed the number of people allowed into the Ninth Nation, then there shouldn’t be any problem.” Suddenly, another peal of thunder rang out, and blood sprayed from the mouths of everyone who didn’t possess a mark. At the same time, Meng Hao flashed across the altar toward one of the Demonic cultivators with a mark on his hand, one of the ones who had been on the verge of attacking him earlier.

“That mark is the crux of things! If you have that mark, you’re qualified to be here!” Killing intent swirling, he shot forward as fast as lightning. With the wave of a hand, rumbling filled Heaven and Earth, and chains of mountains descended, sweeping across everything.

The ten thousand cultivators who were prostrated in worship surrounding the altar all remained there with heads bowed, with the exception of Jian Daozi and the other old men. Everyone else didn't even dare to move.

Jian Daozi stood there watching silently. However, deep within his eyes could be seen a flicker of derision. As for the other old men, they stood in place without saying a word.

Similar scenes played out in the other eight nations. Apparently, virtually all of the visitors from the Mountain and Sea Realm had brought people to tag along.

However, the natural laws of the Windswept Realm had changed, causing widespread shock. Nobody was prepared for the sudden onslaught of thunder. The pressure intensified, and the people who had been brought along felt grave senses of crisis filling them. They knew that this force, intent on wiping them away, would not stop.

Chaotic fighting would soon erupt as everyone realized that each Sea could only have a maximum of nine people in the Windswept Realm!

Without some extraordinary exception, the limit could not be exceeded by even one!

Apparently the Third Sea contained an exception. Xue'er had apparently used some unknown technique to ensure that she would be permitted to stay.

Though they had just arrived, the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm began to fight each other. Bitter battles erupted, and the peals of thunder continued to echo out.

"Since this trifling Windswept Realm wants to eradicate me, I'll just leave!" cried an enraged old man on the altar in the desert of the Ninth Nation. He was bursting with the power of five extinguished Soul Lamps as he flew up into the air to leave the altar.

As he rose up into the air, others on the altar similarly took to flight. However, as soon as the old man left the altar, a huge bolt of lightning

struck down from up above.

The lightning bolt was not complete, and yet it contained natural law and Essence. It moved with incredible speed that made it impossible to evade. It slammed into the old man, and a boom rang out. Before the man could even scream, he was completely wiped out in body and soul, transformed into nothing more than ash.

The scene caused everyone else to gasp, and the cultivators who had just flown into the air suddenly stopped in place, expressions of astonishment covering their faces.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he smiled slightly.

"I like this place," he said, extending his right hand and causing the chains of mountains to rumble. Blood Demon heads materialized as he began to fight. Booms rang out, and he turned into a huge golden roc. With a flash, he was slashing the Demonic cultivator's head, after which he turned and unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist on one of the other two howling Demonic cultivators who had leaped to attack him.

The fist struck nothing but air, and yet blood sprayed from their mouths, and booms rang out. One of them exploded into pieces, and the other was sent tumbling off of the altar, after which a bolt of lightning fell and exterminated him.

Simultaneously, a stream of red qi rose up from the dead Demonic cultivator. Eyes glittering, Meng Hao reached out and grabbed it, then sent it into this bag of holding, toward the back of Chu Yuyan's hand. It turned into a sealing mark, which instantly put her out of danger. She now had the qualifications to be in this place. He quickly sent her a large quantity of medicinal pills to help her recover.

"Meng Hao, what are you doing!?!?" cried Fan Dong'er. The altar was instantly thrown into chaos. The fact that Meng Hao had instantly resorted to violent fighting caused the older cultivators and Demonic cultivators to guess about the natural laws of the Windswept Realm, and they also began to attack.

"Can't you see?!" Meng Hao said. "Only nine people are allowed to be

here! If we don't kill them... then they'll kill us! It doesn't matter which of us dies... as long as only nine remain alive, everything will be fine!

"Even if you don't attack... those stowaways will continue to grow weaker from the thunder! Therefore... their only option is to kill us and take our places!" Meng Hao waved his hand, causing his Divine Flame Immortal meridian to erupt with power. Flames rolled back and forth, a mass of destruction.

In response to Meng Hao's words, the two young men behind Fan Dong'er suddenly launched attacks, not against Fan Dong'er, but rather, against the other three cultivators who had arrived in the Windswept Realm by the correct method.

Booms echoed out. Fan Dong'er was helpless to stop anything that was happening. Both the Demonic cultivators and ordinary cultivators devolved into even more chaotic fighting. Bei Yu looked extremely nervous as the two old women next to her looked around angrily and then began to levy vicious attacks in all directions.

Of course... the stowaways were the most nervous of all. As the thunder continued to boom, they received continuous injuries. Their current situation was like a sword hanging over their heads!

They could see the red marks on the hands of Meng Hao and the others, and knew that they represented the qualifications to be in this place, to be immune to the peals of thunder. If they didn't quickly earn themselves qualifications, they would die without a doubt!

Bloodcurdling screams rang out constantly, and fierce fighting raged. As more people died, more chances were presented to survive. Under such pressure of life or death, it was a matter of this isn't about you dying, it's about me living!

"Don't blame me! I don't want to do this, but... I have to keep living!" The Demonic cultivator who had brought up the idea of all the local cultivators ending their own lives, ended up dying at the hands of one of the other Demonic cultivators that he had brought along. He could only watch helplessly as he heard similarly cold words spoken to him, and then

saw the red mark fade from his hand.

“DIE!!” The cultivators brought by Fan Dong’er were also killed by fellow sect members. They died, eyes wide with regret.

Miserable screams rang out constantly as the number of people on the altar slowly grew smaller and smaller. At the same time, the booms of thunder grew more intense and more frequent!

Chapter 1089: Who's Fighting and Who's Watching?

Meng Hao was in the middle of it all, fighting fiercely whoever he encountered.

The viciousness on display caused Jian Daozi and the others to go cold with fright. Jian Daozi himself gasped and stared at Meng Hao with renewed fear and awe.

Because of a unique reason, Jian Daozi had lived for a very long time, and seen many Immortals. Although his cultivation base was not very high, he was intelligent and discerning, and could tell that Meng Hao possessed strength that the other Immortals simply did not.

“He must be in the Immortal World's feared... Echelon!” he thought, his eyes widening.

Blood flowed off of the altar in bright red rivulets, even streams, which spread out into the desert sands. The reek of blood spread out, filling the air, even covering some of the magical symbols on the altar, causing them to cast bizarre light into the air.

Fewer and fewer people could be seen on the altar. Originally, there had been more than twenty, but now, there were only eleven!

Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu were still there, but the other cultivators who had originally joined them had all been replaced, with the exception of the burly body cultivator, who managed to cunningly avoid all attacks levied against him.

Fan Dong'er was no longer flanked by three people, but two. They were both young, their faces pale white, with blood seeping out of the corners of their mouths. Pools of blood could be seen beneath their feet.

Originally, Bei Yu had been accompanied by two other Demonic cultivators. Now, there were five. Two were old women, plus three other Demonic cultivators. Those who had brought them here had been killed by other cultivators, and these were the ones who had managed to hold

out until the very end.

However, thunder still boomed, and as for the number of people present... there were still two too many!

Among the eleven people present, eight had red sealing marks on the backs of their hands. Those who didn't included one ordinary cultivator and two Demonic cultivators. All of them had ashen faces, and absolutely no sealing marks!

Those sealing marks were like a seal of life, a mark of approval from the Windswept Realm. Anyone who had that sealing mark would not be wiped away by the Heavenly thunder.

Blood flowed across the altar as everyone stood there silently, staring at Meng Hao. Fear could be seen deep in their eyes; in the battle just now, more than half of the people slain had been killed by him.

Down below the altar, Jian Daozi and the others were shocked to the core. The image of Meng Hao slaughtering his enemies was burned deep in their hearts, leaving an indelible impression.

After a few short breaths of time, fighting broke out once again; virtually everyone attacked at the same time, trying to wipe out the three cultivators with no marks on their hands.

Those three knew that if they couldn't get one of the sealing marks, they would be wiped out by the thunder, completely eradicated!

Thunder boomed, and blood sprayed out of the three cultivators' mouths. There was no need to mention the severe internal injuries they had sustained; they were growing so weak that it seemed any of the subsequent thunderclaps could wipe them out. They began to go mad, roaring, burning life force, exploding with all the power they could muster.

It was with utter madness that they attacked the fellow sect members who they thought they could defeat!

Booms echoed out as the fierce fighting raged. The cultivators of the Windswept Realm continued to keep their heads bowed, not daring to even peep at what was happening, although Jian Daozi and his group

looked on.

Meng Hao waved his hand, and the Essence of Divine Flame erupted out. He pushed his hand down onto the shoulder of one of the Demonic cultivators with no sealing mark, and instantly, the man was consumed by Divine Flame. A miserable shriek could be heard as Meng Hao pulled his hand back, and the Demonic cultivator transformed into nothing but ash.

Simultaneously, the other two with no sealing marks were killed, reducing the number of people on the altar... to only eight!

In addition to Meng Hao, there were two ordinary cultivators and five Demonic cultivators, all of whom had marks on their hands!

All of them breathed sighs of relief.

“It’s finally over....”

“I can’t believe the natural laws in the Windswept Realm have changed....”

Even Jian Daozi and the others below the altar assumed that everything was over. However... thunder continued to boom! Everyone’s faces fell, but no one coughed up blood. However, the fact that the thunder had not ceased indicated only one thing.

There was still someone without a sealing mark! Furthermore, that person was not present on the altar itself!

“Impossible! We’re obviously the only ones left! Why is there still Heavenly thunder!?!?”

“Someone must still be hiding people in their bag of holding!!” Everyone began to look around suspiciously. Fan Dong’er gritted her teeth as she realized that there were more Demonic cultivators than ordinary cultivators, which was not to her advantage. After a moment of hesitation, she opened her bag of holding and let everyone see that it was empty of people.

The other cultivators behind her didn’t hesitate to do the same, and eventually, even the Demonic cultivators, including Bei Yu, did the same.

Eventually, Meng Hao was the only one who hadn't opened his bag of holding.

At that point, all eyes fell on Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao already got one of the other sealing marks and put it in his bag of holding!" Thunder boomed, and everyone looked at Meng Hao with vigilant eyes.

Meng Hao was the most powerful among them, a fact which had been made very clear in the fighting moments ago. At this moment, Meng Hao... was the greatest threat to all of them.

Another clap of thunder could be heard, but this time, it wasn't just a noise. A bolt of lightning fell from the sky, slamming onto the altar with incredible destructive power. The entire altar shook, and Meng Hao dodged to the side to avoid being hit.

"Meng Hao, what are you doing!? Open up your bag of holding and kill that person!"

"If you don't do something, then don't blame us for joining forces to kill you!" Everyone was shocked by the booming thunder, and the bolt of lightning that had fallen. From their perspective, if Meng Hao didn't open his bag of holding and kill the person inside, then all of them would end up dead.

Meng Hao's eyes widened. Currently, Su Yan was inside his bag of holding, trembling. Her fear was a bit surprising to Meng Hao; originally, she had been completely unafraid of dying. Now, however, she seemed terrified of it, a total change that couldn't help but cause a bit of suspicion to well up in his heart.

"Could it be that she has some sort of reincarnation magic, so that if I kill her, she'll be able to resurrect herself, but if she's killed by the thunder of the World Essence, she'll actually die?!" Meng Hao's eyes flashed, and then he thought about Su Yan's other unique divine abilities, and realized that such a thing wasn't impossible.

As he stood there thinking, the other people on the altar were

increasingly shocked by the thunder and lightning.

“Let’s join forces! Even if we can’t kill him ourselves, we can at least force him off the altar. Then the thunder will help us kill that person in his bag of holding!”

People began to call out: “Attack together!”

The Demonic cultivators already hated Meng Hao, so they immediately joined together and attacked Meng Hao.

At the same time, even Fan Dong’er and the other ordinary cultivators joined together to charge Meng Hao. Meng Hao’s actions now affected all of their lives, so how could they not take action?

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Instead of attacking, he fell back, buying time to send divine will into his bag of holding to yell into Su Yan’s ear.

“Give me one of your divine abilities, and I’ll get you a spot in the Windswept Realm!” He was determined to give this tactic a shot.

Su Yan’s face fell. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and her expression was one of unprecedented fear. She could sense the deadly attacks from the outside, but she still wasn’t willing to give one of her divine abilities to Meng Hao.

“I’ll die first!” she responded.

“I don’t want all of them, just one will do! You have to give me some reason to help you avoid being wiped out by the Windswept Realm!” Meng Hao continued to back up as everyone attacked him. He danced back and forth, expression calm as he used divine will to try to persuade Su Yan.

Thunder struck again, and it was even more intense than last time. Two bolts of lightning fell, causing everyone’s minds to reel. Meng Hao’s face fell, and the sensation of deadly crisis grew stronger. It was as if... the next volley of lightning would definitely hit him.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. The best option right now would be to simply kill Su Yan, which would cause the lightning to dissipate. If he pushed things too much further, he would be putting himself at grave risk.

“Chances like this aren’t easy to come by... it would be a big shame to give up now.” His eyes flashed as he once again sensed Su Yan’s fear of the thunder and lightning.

Gritting his teeth, he fell back again, and once again sent out some divine will.

Su Yan could sense the will of death in the lightning, and it caused her to tremble. She didn’t fear Meng Hao killing her, but she definitely feared being eradicated by the lightning!

The sensation of imminent death grew more intense, and she could tell that another round of thunder and lightning was coming.

“If I die, you’ll die too!!” she cried. In response, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding and pulled Su Yan out. Thunder boomed, and seven bolts of lightning coalesced up above; at the same time, he made as if to throw her out in front of him,

“I’ll only give you one divine ability!!” Su Yan shrieked as she looked at the lightning; she couldn’t hold on any longer.

“Fine! I want your Seven God Steps!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and he pushed his divine will toward her. Su Yan knew that she didn’t have much time. Although it irked her, she had no other choice, and so she allowed his divine will to enter her mind and take the Seven God Steps Daoist magic. 1

In the moment that Meng Hao acquired the Daoist magic, the seven bolts of lightning began to fall. Suddenly, Meng Hao spun, and the Lightning Cauldron appeared in his hand. Electricity danced, and he switched places with one of the old Demonic cultivator women. As soon as he reappeared, next to one of the other Demonic cultivators, he unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist.

He moved so quickly that nobody had time to react. In the blink of an eye, thunder boomed, and the Demonic cultivator exploded into a cloud of blood and gore.

As soon as the Demonic cultivator died, the mark on his hand vanished,

transforming into a red qi that then solidified on Su Yan's hand.

In that same instant, the seven bolts of lightning vanished without a trace, and the thunder faded away.

There were now only eight people on the altar again, one less Demonic cultivator, and an additional trembling Su Yan.

If you added in Chu Yuyan, who was still in his bag of holding, that made a total of nine cultivators!

All of them had marks on their hands, indicating that they qualified to remain in the Windswept Realm!

As of this moment, the fighting stopped. No one continued to attack Meng Hao. They all backed up, looking around vigilantly, quietly, expressions of sorrow on their faces.

As they looked down at the ten thousand cultivators below the altar, and the tens of thousands of other humans arranged further off, Fan Dong'er and the others suddenly didn't feel at all like superiors. Instead, they felt like cage fighters, with the people surrounding them being the audience, despite the fact that they didn't even lift their heads to look.

The superiors were the show, and the inferiors were the audience. Therefore, just exactly... who were the superiors?

*

1. Su Yan used the Seven God Steps (although with a slightly different name) against Meng Hao in chapter 1032.

Chapter 1090: The Echelon's Declarations of War!

At this point, it was hard to say who was actually the superior in this situation.

On the Ninth Nation's altar, Meng Hao stood off to the side, looking up into the sky. He had already re-sealed Su Yan and tossed her back into his bag of holding. Now he stood there in the desert wind, which sent bits of dust blowing into his hair and onto his robes.

Behind him, the others stood by quietly, looking at his back, feeling fear and other complicated emotions. Even Fan Dong'er was no exception.

Meng Hao's fierce fighting had placed him above the others in terms of power, securing his position of utmost seniority within the Ninth Nation.

Down below, Jian Daozi and the others were also looking at Meng Hao, and their eyes were filled with reverence for Immortals. Finally, they lowered their heads and dropped to their knees in obeisance.

They knew that, as of this moment, they didn't need to worry about any order given by any of the other Immortals. Until Meng Hao left the Ninth Nation, or was supplanted by someone else, his words... were the only orders to be followed.

Meanwhile, the altar in the Eighth Nation was littered with bones. An aura of death towered up into the sky, and eight cultivators could be seen, trembling as they prostrated themselves toward a black-robed young man up in front, who sat on a pile of bleached bones. He was none other than the Echelon cultivator from the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

"You people didn't bring many guests with you. Why didn't you bring more? I... feel like doing some more killing." His eyes gleamed with a brutal light as he looked at the trembling cultivators around him. Suddenly, a murderous aura exploded up from him. He was completely surrounded by corpses, none of which remained intact.

Blood stained the altar red.

In the Seventh Nation, a young man stood there with a long spear, surrounded by eight trembling cultivators. Shockingly, seven heads were impaled kebab-like on the spear.

“I don’t want to kill all of you, but who said that you could try to steal my Echelon status from me, huh? In the Seventh Mountain and Sea, I don’t dare to act too excessively, but here... you people are nothing!” The young man smiled, seemingly brimming with complete confidence in himself.

In the Sixth Nation, a boy sat cross-legged on the altar. He appeared to be only seven or eight years old, and he looked around through squinted eyes at the people who surrounded him, eight burly fellows, all of whom had cold faces.

The Sixth Nation was special. Because no one had brought any extra visitors, no thunder had appeared.

The strangest of all was the Fifth Nation. The altar there was soaked in blood, and only one person remained alive, standing on the edge of the altar. He was a bit overweight, and wore a perpetual smile on his face. However, hidden within that smile was icy coldness.

All of the other people who had arrived with him were now dead; he was the only survivor.

“Wanted to snatch my position in the Echelon?” the young man murmured. “You people simply didn’t qualify.”

Silence reigned in the Fourth Nation. Lin Cong stood there, wearing a long white robe, looking around proudly. Directly behind him were four cultivators, all of whom had vicious expressions on their faces. They were surrounded by numerous corpses.

From beginning to end, Lin Cong never made a single move. However, his four followers had directly slaughtered the other four cultivators who had come with them, as well as any stowaways they had brought along.

“I hope things get a bit more interesting here,” Lin Cong said with a slight smile.

Rivers of blood ran in the Third Nation. However, there was something

different there; among the nine people present, not a single one was a member of the Echelon! Among those nine people was a middle-aged man who wore Imperial robes. He stood there with a slight smile that contained contentment and anticipation.

“I’ve been waiting for far, far too long.... At long last, the day has come. The words spoken by the Imperial Lord turned out to be true!” Even as he spoke, he looked off into the distance, toward a figure speeding through the air.

It was a woman, the tenth person to appear on the altar!

None of the ten thousand cultivators beneath the altar had their heads bowed. Instead, they were looking at the man in the Imperial robes, their eyes burning with fanaticism.

On the Second Nation’s altar, everything was quiet. In fact, it was so quiet, the mood was terrifying. There was no reek of blood, but rather, icy coldness spread out, turning the entire altar into a chunk of ice.

In the middle of that ice was a man in a blue robe.

His eyes were closed, and eight unmoving corpses lay on the ground around him.

The First Nation’s altar was the strangest scene of all. None of the figures beneath the altar were bowing their heads. No, they had been ordered to raise their heads up. They stood there, trembling with fear as they looked at a white-robed man floating above the surface of the altar.

His expression was calm, as if he were contemplating enlightenment. He was staring at his right hand, within which could be seen, shockingly... a bolt of lightning. The lightning looked extraordinary, and if Meng Hao were here, he would instantly recognize... the Heavenly lightning of a type of Lightning Cauldron!

The white-robed man appeared to be contemplating it, as if he were determining a way to control it.

With his cultivation base and his level of power, this man could be only one person: the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, widely

acknowledged to be one of its three most powerful members!

Behind him were eight other cultivators who had arrived from the First Mountain and Sea. All of them were his personal followers; not a single one was a disciple of any other organization in the First Mountain and Sea.

These were people he had forced to capitulate during the many battles he had fought. Afterwards, they had become his followers, and even fought for him. Most surprising of all was that of these eight people who had chosen to become his followers, one of them was another member of the Echelon!

To join the Echelon, and yet choose to follow that white-robed young man, showed how incredibly powerful he was.

“So it turns out that gaining enlightenment of the Essence of lightning is much easier here than in the Mountain and Sea Realm.” After a long moment, the white-robed young man clenched his hand into a fist. Crackling sounds could be heard, and the lightning vanished, disappearing into his body. His eyes suddenly began to glow brightly.

“The Windswept Realm has been opened many times, but this is my first time here. What do you all say? Do you think I’ll be able to collect some people and items that might satisfy me? Will I be able to truly take away the World Essence?

“Although, what I’m actually looking forward to most... is searching for another member of the Echelon, most preferably a male!” The white-robed young man chuckled. He turned to a woman who was standing behind him, and ran his finger down her jaw. The woman lowered her head and smiled. As for his other followers, two were women and five were men. All of them smiled in response to the young man’s words.

The sky in the Windswept Realm gradually cleared. After the space of ten breaths of time, a cold voice suddenly rang out from the Heavens into the First Nation and all the other nations in the Windswept Realm. Apparently, the inhabitants of the Windswept Realm itself could not hear this voice, only the newcomers.

“Let the trial by fire... begin!

“The central temple is where the final decision will be made. Immortal cultivators may not enter there now. Use the Nine Nations as the game board, and the soldiers and cultivators of the Windswept Realm as the game pieces. Let the Grand War of Nine Nations begin!

“Each nation has a Seal of the Windswept Realm. Whoever acquires the most National Seals will be able to enter the central temple!

“And now... the barriers between the Nine Nations shall be removed!” The voice that spoke was ancient, and yet seemed somewhat numb, almost emotionless, as if it were a puppet. Even as the voice boomed out, the windstorm barriers separating the Nine Nations of the Windswept Realm all vanished!

Now there was nothing sealing or protecting any of the nations; they were all connected....

Furthermore, the ground began to quake as all of the natural laws and Essences of the Windswept Realm was unleashed. Spiritual energy surged, and the natural laws went into flux. Essence was revealed in a way that made gaining enlightenment seemingly simple.

Heaven and Earth lost color, and a mighty wind sprang up which screamed out in all directions.

On the First Nation’s altar, the white-robed young man laughed heartily. As the windstorm barriers fell, he could instantly sense the other Echelon auras in the Windswept Realm.

To his senses, those auras were like bright lamps in the darkness of night, clearly visible.

As he laughed, the white-robed young man’s energy surged, merging into Heaven and Earth. His cultivation base erupted, sending an incredibly powerful aura sweeping out.

He was making a declaration of war... against all of the other eight nations in the Windswept Realm!

At the same time, amidst the iciness of the Second Nation, the blue-robed man's eyes snapped open. He looked at the corpses around him for a moment, and their eyes opened to reveal a gray glow. Cracking and popping sounds could be heard as layers of ice shattered. Energy also surged out of the blue-robed young man, another declaration of war!

In the Third Nation, the middle-aged man in the Imperial robes laughed eerily. Although he clearly had no sealing mark on him, he still emanated the energy of a sealing mark, which rose up into the sky.

In the Fourth Nation, Lin Cong looked around proudly, and his energy spiked. As of this moment, no one was willing to reveal any bit of weakness. They were all members of the Echelon, Chosen of the Mountain and Sea Realm. In the Windswept Realm, where they were completely free and unconstrained, any show of weakness would be sensed by others... and would no doubt lead to their respective nation being the first to be eradicated, and to the loss of their National Seal.

In the Fifth Nation, the smiling young man smiled even wider, and his energy flew up.

In the Sixth Nation, the boy laughed piercingly as he rose to his feet. Shockingly, his energy rose up rapidly, causing the wind to surge and the Heavens to shake.

In the Seventh Nation and Eighth Nation, the Echelon also declared war!

Meng Hao trembled and looked up into the sky. The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm could hear the words spoken by the ancient voice. However, they had no way to detect the surging energy and domineering auras of the Echelon cultivators in the other eight nations.

It was as if all of them were sending notices to the other Echelon members that they were on their way.

"A declaration of war, huh...." thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He had long since left the other members of his generation of the Ninth Mountain and Sea behind. He was like an enormous mountain in their path. All of the important Chosen owed him money, and were bound to him by Karma with promissory notes.

He had long since come to the conclusion that it would be a difficult thing to find any more Chosen to get promissory notes from. But now that he could sense the energy of the other Echelon members... Meng Hao's eyes began to shine brightly.

"These guys ought to be even richer than the people from the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" he thought, taking a deep breath and getting even more excited. Finally, he caused his own energy to surge, causing it to blaze like a signal fire. At the same time, he looked slightly embarrassed as he added A Writ of Karma into his surging energy, creating an opportunity for an initial contact of Karma, laying down the first Karma Thread connection.

You declare war? I declare a season of promissory notes!

I will make all members of the Echelon owe me money and give me promissory notes!

Meng Hao was determined to stick to his path of promissory notes, and not waver!

As of this moment, the energy of all of the members of the Echelon surged in their respective areas, then spread out until they clashed with the others.

Colors flashed in the sky, and the wind seethed. Rumbling filled the air as the energy of the Echelon members clashed.

Chapter 1091: The Scheming of Jian Daozi

The world rumbled, colors flashed in the sky, and the wind screamed.... At the same time, the Echelon members in each of the Nine Nations sent their energy surging, something... that no one but they themselves could sense.

However, everyone on the altars in the various Nine Nations were clearly able to tell that the air of war had filled the world!

Declarations had been made, indicating that the Echelon battles were beginning!

This place... was the long-awaited battlefield for the Echelon. Everyone else would be relegated to mere supporting roles!

Although nobody wanted to admit it, Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu and the other cultivators knew so. They stood there silently, looking at Meng Hao standing at the edge of the altar, radiating an unmatched energy as he looked around at the people prostrating themselves down below.

All of a sudden they understood that this place... belonged to the Echelon!

If the options were to be either a bright flower or a dark, faded leaf, fate had given them no choice in the matter, and had relegated them all to be nothing more than leaves....

Fan Dong'er's eyes glittered with an unyielding light. Bei Yu had a similar reaction. She was a woman with the same position as the sect's Holy Daughter. She had high aspirations, and was not willing to be left in the dust by anyone.

After a while, the surging energy that were the declarations of war by the members of the Echelon located throughout the Windswept Realm... slowly faded away. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve and stepped off of the altar.

"Raise your heads, all of you!" he said immediately. His voice echoed out across the lands into the ears of all of the cultivators of the Windswept

Realm, and into the minds of the tens of thousands of mortals off in the distance.

Without even thinking about it, everyone raised their heads and looked at him. As of this moment, all eyes were focused on Meng Hao. He hovered there in midair, his robes swirling, his hair floating around him. The will of an Immortal Emperor transformed into a unique aura.

It was an indescribable aura, but at the moment, it instilled everyone with the impulse to offer worship.

“Greetings, Exalted Immortal!” A chorus of voices echoed out across the lands. As the powerful sound rolled out, Jian Daozi flew up into the air, swishing his sleeve and causing brilliant light to surround him.

“Form the Grand Carriage!” Immediately, a thousand cultivators flew out from the group below and organized into a formation that resembled a flying battleship!

They were followed by another eight thousand cultivators, who also formed flying battleships, making a total of nine. It was possible to see cultivators all packed together to form the battleships, their expressions fanatical, as if serving Immortals was an unmatched honor.

Each battleship also featured two groups of cultivators on the deck, organized in ranks, men and women. Of the male cultivators, each one was extremely handsome, the type that any woman in the mortal world would instantly fall in love with.

The female cultivators were incredibly beautiful and pure, and each one could be considered a consummate beauty.

All of them knelt there, apparently ready to fulfill any request without the slightest hesitation.

“Exalted Immortals, please, after you!” cried Jian Daozi, dropping to his knees.

“Exalted Immortals, please, after you!” the other old men cried, along with all the other cultivators.

Meng Hao stared in shock. Although he had enjoyed the feeling of being completely unrestrained in the Windswept Realm, he was still not used to situations like this.

Using people as a ship...?

“Jian Daozi, you lead the way. As for this ship... I don’t need it,” he said slowly, beginning to make his way forward. Jian Daozi stared in shock, and an almost imperceptible flicker passed by deep in his eyes. He looked at Meng Hao for a moment, then, without saying anything, flew to follow by his side.

The fact that Meng Hao refused to use the ship didn’t mean that the other cultivators had to refuse. In fact, the Demonic cultivators were currently staring in shock. Since they had been smuggled in, they hadn’t experienced the events from the initial entry. They transformed into beams of light which instantly flew over to the various ships formed from cultivators.

When they stepped onto the ships, they were immediately surrounded by the handsome men and beautiful women, who brought delicious alcohol and spirit fruits for them to enjoy. It was an indescribable feeling.

The young cultivator behind Fan Dong’er thought for a moment, then flew over to sit on one of the ships. Immediately, one of the beautiful servants stepped forward and bowed down in front of him.

The young man took a deep breath as he looked around blankly at the ship and everything else.

Eventually, even Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu boarded the ships under the fanatical gazes of the Windswept Realm cultivators. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the ships then flew up into the air.

Down below, the man who appeared to be the emperor of the Ninth Nation led the soldiers into motion. They moved slowly, but there were many of them, and they almost looked like Imperial escorts.

Meng Hao flew along at the front, silent and taciturn. Jian Daozi followed off to the side. The old man’s cultivation base was not in the

Immortal Realm, so it took some effort for him to keep up with Meng Hao. Meng Hao looked over at him and waved his hand, causing a bright light to appear beneath the old man's feet, which instantly increased his speed so that he could follow along closely.

"Many thanks, Exalted Immortal!" Jian Daozi said, clasping his hands in appreciation.

"You can stop it with the false show of respect," Meng Hao said slowly. "It pisses me off. Furthermore... I'm Meng Hao. My surname is not 'Exalted' and my given name is not 'Immortal.'" He spoke the words without the slightest bit of courtesy.

A strange expression appeared on the old man's face. He clasped his hands and respectfully said, "I shall comply with your orders, Exalted Immortal."

Meng Hao proceeded to ignore him. Perhaps because of how they were raised, all of the others from the Mountain and Sea Realm were probably not used to paying close attention to the people they deemed weaker, but Meng Hao, despite having such a high status, and even being the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, had struggled up to that point from a weak and pitiful standing on Planet South Heaven. He had experienced numerous deadly circumstances, and had eventually developed extremely keen eyes. Therefore, he was easily able to detect that Jian Daozi had been scheming all along.

He could clearly see the various things the old man had done. He had never believed that the people of this world would willingly choose to be inferiors. In fact... the people of the Windswept Realm couldn't even be called inferiors; they were more like slaves who didn't even have control over their own lives or deaths. Their fate was completely under the control of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

The entire world was destined to flow with rivers of blood every thousand years, and the inhabitants were like nothing more than crops to be harvested. Their thousand years of rest was merely preparation... for another harvest!

“The natural laws did not change by chance!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He would not be careless in his activities here. Furthermore, he knew many details of certain matters that Fan Dong’er and the others were unaware of.

“Exalted Immortal Meng,” Jian Daozi said ingratiatingly, “Mount Whiteseal is the Ninth Nation’s Mountain of National Aura, the source of our nation’s natural law and Daoist magic. It supports our entire world, and even has Heavenly power!

“Exalted Immortal, by selecting that mountain, you can receive the added support of the National Aura, and will definitely experience cultivation base growth to a level that you can’t even imagine.

“The legends say that the National Aura Mountain was refined from a precious treasure. Perhaps with the abilities and resources at hand as a Chosen, Exalted Immortal Meng, you will be able to acquire even greater good fortune.” The wind buffeted their faces as they flew onward, and Jian Daozi’s words were carried backward so that Fan Dong’er and the others could hear.

Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place, turned, and looked deeply into Jian Daozi’s eyes. Then, an enigmatic smile appeared on his face, and his eyes gradually shone with an intense gleam.

The look in Meng Hao’s eyes caused thumping sounds to pound inside of Jian Daozi. However, he maintained the same smile as ever, and ducked his head respectfully.

“You know,” Meng Hao said coolly. “I’ve killed a lot of people. Many of them were schemers, and when I discovered their plots against me, I removed their heads.

“For example, you used a simple map to quickly divide nine Exalted Immortals without lifting a finger. You benefited from the misfortune of others, and also gained some profound insights. Truly an excellent scheme.

“Later, when the lightning and thunder struck us, you looked surprised, but deep in your eyes, you were actually mocking us. Don’t think that

nobody noticed your act. How did you come to be aware that the natural laws had changed?”

With each of Meng Hao’s successive statements, Jian Daozi looked more surprised. He started to look anxious, as if he felt there were some misunderstanding. Terrified, he was about to offer an explanation when Meng Hao continued.

“One map unleashed internal chaos,” he said coolly. “One natural law caused a deadly crisis.

“I honestly don’t care much about those things. However, just now, you tried to use that mountain to gain the upper hand again. Did you really think that you could borrow the strength of my hands to slay the others, just because I was stronger than them?” His words caused Jian Daozi’s face to grow deathly pale, and he began to tremble in terror.

“Exalted Immortal, please calm yourself. Everything was just a misunderstanding! It... it wasn’t like that at all! I....” Sweat poured down Jian Daozi’s face, and he seemed horrified, as if he were being wrongly accused of a crime he didn’t commit.

“Let me guess,” continued Meng Hao, his voice growing colder by the moment. “If I were you, I wouldn’t devise a plan which relied on only one person, even if you did end up convincing me about the mountain. After all, none of them would be likely to try to provoke me directly. What you want to do is throw out some other seeds to attract their interest.

“Those seeds of interest... will eventually give birth to a struggle over the mountain.

“Their obsession over the mountain is like a hidden weapon that would not be easily noticed. In addition to all of that, if I were you, I would definitely prepare some other knives to stick into the backs of us Immortals. That would also provide a warning that... we should not act presumptuously here!! My guess is that one of those knives will be making an appearance quite soon.”

Jian Daozi smiled wryly, as if he had valid protestations which were merely falling on deaf ears. He seemed to be on the verge of trying to

concoct some explanation when, all of a sudden, something became visible off in the distance. There, a waterfall could be seen, at the base of which was a pond. Next to that pond sat a white fox.

A piece of white jade could be seen on the fox's head, which looked completely beyond ordinary. As the fox practiced breathing techniques, it caused all of the light in the area to converge on the fox's head.

Suddenly, one of the middle-aged Demonic cultivators from the Nine Seas God World caught sight of the white fox. His eyes went wide, and he shouted, "Divine Demon jade!!"

A look of greed and wild joy instantly appeared on the Demonic cultivator's face. There was a flash as he flew off of the ship he had been riding and headed directly toward the fox.

"If I were you, I wouldn't do that," Meng Hao said, stopping in place. In response, Jian Daozi's face flickered. The middle-aged Demonic cultivator stared in shock for a moment, then gave a cold harrumph.

He was well aware of what kind of place the Windswept Realm was, that there was nothing here that exceeded the Immortal Realm. It was a place without laws or rules, and therefore, nobody could stop him from taking something he wanted!

He sent out his divine sense and, sensing nothing abnormal, completely ignored Meng Hao and closed in on the white fox, reaching his hand out to grab to the piece of white jade.

Chapter 1092: Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke!

Just as the middle-aged Demonic cultivator was closing in on the white jade, all of a sudden, a cold snort could be heard echoing out from inside the waterfall.

“Scram!” someone said.

The single word seemed to invoke thunder and lightning. A shocking energy rose up, causing everything to shake. A windstorm sprang into being, which promptly slammed into the Demonic cultivator.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE....

The Demonic cultivator’s face flickered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth in a continuous stream as he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut. He fell back several hundred meters before finally coming to a stop, his face pale, his body trembling.

Bei Yu sat on her ship, which currently hovered in midair. All of a sudden, her face flickered, and she spoke four words, one at a time.

“Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke!!” 1

The other Demonic cultivators’ minds trembled, and expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces as they looked over at the waterfall.

Even Fan Dong’er appeared to be shocked.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed. The voice which had spoken just now used only one phrase to unleash unthinkable power. That one phrase was like a magical technique, a divine ability that could... shake the mind. Not only did it leave the Demonic cultivator’s body trembling, it also was a powerful attack on his very thoughts.

Meng Hao was familiar with the four words that Bei Yu had uttered. He knew that it was one of the three most powerful Daoist magics of the Nine Seas God World’s Demonic Cultivator Horde!

“Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke can turn one’s own divine sense into

an attack on the self....” he thought. “It is impossible to defend against, and the stronger one’s divine sense, the more terrifying the results!”

Very few Demonic cultivators were able to successfully learn it. In the current generation, only Bei Yu and Long Tianhai had ever studied it, as well as the other eight Sea Realm Demons.

From the way it had been used, Meng Hao, along with Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu, could all tell that whoever was inside the waterfall hadn’t attacked with killing intent, but rather, was issuing a warning.

The Demonic cultivator hovered in midair, his face pale white, looking at the waterfall with terror. Finally he clasped hands and bowed deeply, then hurried back to his ship. The white fox hadn’t moved the entire time, nor had it even looked up. It simply continued to practice breathing techniques with the white jade.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, but he continued to stand there silently. Bei Yu hesitated for a moment, then moved forward toward the waterfall. Feeling she had no other choice, she clasped hands and bowed, then said, “I am Sea Daughter Bei Yu of the Junior generation, from the Nine Seas God World. Senior, what relationship do you have with our Demonic Cultivator Horde?”

Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke was an esoteric magic of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, something that no outsider would ever have access to. And yet, they had all seen it unleashed right here.

There was no response from the waterfall, and eventually, the white fox opened its mouth and swallowed the white jade. Then, it turned, disappearing into the waterfall in a flash of white.

Bei Yu hesitated for a moment, and finally decided not to risk going into the waterfall. Just now, the power of a single word had revealed that the cultivation base of whoever was inside... was terrifyingly powerful.

After clasping hands respectfully one more time, Bei Yu headed back to her ship. It was in that moment that Meng Hao blinked his right eye nine times in quick succession. Rumbling filled his mind as his view of the world suddenly changed completely. His vision was suddenly empowered

to pierce through the waterfall where, shockingly, he saw an Immortal's cave, and a middle-aged man sitting there cross-legged. Located next to the man was a tomb!

It was as if the man had always been there, and always would be, sitting there accompanying the tomb!

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on him, the man in the Immortal's cave suddenly turned to look at him. As their gazes met, an expression of shock could be seen in his eyes, and he waved his sleeve, terminating Meng Hao's vision. Pain filled his mind, and his face reddened, but he quickly recovered.

Despite the vision having ended, he could still clearly picture the man's appearance, and remembered that the man had a white scale on his forehead.

"He was a Demonic cultivator!" he thought. After a moment, he proceeded forward. Jian Daozi hesitated for a moment, then followed. Soon, everyone else on the ships followed suit.

After proceeding onward for a bit, Meng Hao's hand suddenly shot out to grab Jian Daozi. Jian Daozi considered dodging, but hesitated, and Meng Hao's hand latched onto his arm.

"Exalted Immortal...." he said, sounding alarmed.

Meng Hao's face was calm as his hand clenched down onto Jian Daozi's arm. Cracking sounds could be heard as he then cleanly ripped off one of Jian Daozi's fingers. The pain caused Jian Daozi to shake, but he didn't dare to show any anger, only fear.

"That Demonic cultivator just now was one of the knives you had prepared to stick into our backs, right?" Meng Hao said coolly. Then he released Jian Daozi's arm.

A bitter look appeared on Jian Daozi's face, as if he wanted to explain what had happened, but couldn't.

"You can continue to pretend as much as you want, but remember... don't provoke me!" Meng Hao said one word at a time, staring Jian Daozi

in the eye.

“Ripping off your finger was just a warning. If you dare to provoke me again... I don’t care who you have hidden here in the Windswept Realm, nor how many knives you’ve prepared... you will regret it.” At this point, Meng Hao gave a slight smile.

To Jian Daozi, however, that smile was filled with something utterly terrifying, as if the person in front of him were a fiendish monster, someone he didn’t dare to ever provoke. If he did, then... he had no idea what the consequences might be.

They didn’t encounter anything unusual during the rest of their journey. Nor did Jian Daozi speak any further with Meng Hao. As they traveled along, Meng Hao continued to take in the sights, his expression tranquil.

As for the other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, they proceeded along quietly. After what had happened to the middle aged Demonic cultivator, their aggressive attitudes seemed to have been reined in, and they didn’t impulsively try to grab any of the desirable things they saw along the way.

The Ninth Nation was not very large. After flying for about half a day, Bei Yu veered off toward the Immortal’s cave she had selected. One by one, the other Demonic cultivators also left, and eventually Fan Dong’er and her young cultivator companion departed. Soon, a city appeared up ahead of Meng Hao.

It was a city of mortals, and was also the capital city of the Ninth Nation.

Behind the capital city, a mountain was just barely visible. The top half was capped in snow, and the bottom half was emerald green. Beneath the mountain was a lake, which was fed by a river that stretched off into the distance.

The lake was as smooth as a mirror, without the slightest wave or ripple, revealing a perfect reflection of the sky.

Jian Daozi continued to accompany Meng Hao as he flew past the city and across the lake. Soon, he was directly in front of Mount Whiteseal.

As they neared, a frigid wind blew down from the mountain. It was currently summer, and the heat was oppressive, so the cold wind was incredibly refreshing. It was the kind of feeling that would cause people to instantly take a liking to this mountain that was half-covered in snow.

The feeling was reinforced by the white snow on the top half of the mountain, which formed a striking contrast with the emerald green bottom half. The thing that moved Meng Hao the most, though, was that as they neared, he could clearly sense the natural law and World Essence... growing stronger and more defined.

It was as if this mountain were the nucleus of the entire Ninth Nation, as if it was the source of all the natural law and Essence.

In addition, the mountain caused Meng Hao to feel a sensation similar to that which he had experienced from the Towers of Tang on Planet South Heaven.

It was the type of feeling that came from an object that had been the subject of worship for countless tens of thousands of years. It was an intangible energy, similar to that which came from burning incense. After congealing to a certain extent, it became the National Aura of the Ninth Nation, and eventually transformed... into a type of qi flow!

The qi flow of the Windswept Realm!

Meng Hao was becoming increasingly moved. His eyes gradually grew wider as he gazed up at the highest peaks of the mountain, from which he sensed some type of summoning.

The sensation slowly grew more and more intense, causing Meng Hao's heart to begin to pound. His blood began to surge through his veins, and soon he couldn't control the urge to head to the peak of the mountain and see what it was that was calling him.

Just when he was about to step forward, he stopped.

"Interesting. For some reason, I have the feeling that the purpose of the summons is to try to entice me to fly directly to the peak of the mountain...." After a moment of thought, he didn't do so, but rather, began

to ascend the stone stairs which began at the very foot.

Behind him, Jian Daozi and the other old men noticed what he was doing, and exchanged shocked looks.

Mount Whiteseal was the most sacred location in all of the Ninth Nation, a Holy Mountain that many Immortals had visited in the past. Virtually all of them had chosen to fly directly to the top, whereas Meng Hao chose to walk up slowly from the bottom. It was extremely rare.

Actually, ascending the mountain from the very bottom would impart an even more profound sensation regarding the natural laws and Essences that were focused on this nucleus of the Ninth Nation, as well as the National Aura.

Meng Hao began to walk up the steps, taking his time. Sometimes he even stopped to relish the sensation of the natural laws on the mountain, and the omnipresent Essences. Furthermore, he was also able to sense... the so-called National Aura which had built up on the mountain because of the years of worship.

At one point, he stretched his right hand out into the air and made a grasping motion. "Is this... the Essence of wind?" he murmured.

Although he didn't know it, somewhere out in the Ninth Nation, a gale-force wind sprang up.

"The Essence of water.... And this is fire.... They're all incomplete...."

Time passed as he strolled his way upward. Soon it was night, and eventually the rising sun could be seen once again. Then it was noontime. It was at this point that he passed out of the emerald green portion of the mountain and entered the snow white area. Step by step, he went onward. He immersed himself in contemplation of the mountain, in enlightenment. He forgot about walking, forgot about even moving forward.

He wasn't aware of it, but as he proceeded along up the mountain, all of the lands of the Ninth Nation were shaking. Wind blew and rain fell. Lights flashed in the sky, and Spirit Springs erupted. Mountains vanished

and then reappeared, and rivers changed course. The entire world was altered.

All of the changes occurred due to Meng Hao walking up the mountain and contemplating the world's natural laws. As he gained enlightenment of the Essences of Heaven and Earth, he made acquisitions which manifested as transformations in the Ninth Nation.

Back at the foot of the mountain, Jian Daozi and the others had long since begun to stare with wide eyes and slack jaws. Even more so than the other old men, Jian Daozi's eyes were now filled with profound anxiety. And what he was anxious about was clearly not Meng Hao.

In fact, Meng Hao wasn't even aware of the fact that he had already reached the peak of the mountain!

*

1. The name of this magic is actually also a chengyu, a Chinese idiom. The definition of the idiom itself is: to mislead the public with rumors, to delude the people with lies. In this case I'm pretty sure Er Gen just copied it because it has the word "demon" in it. The literal character-by-character translation would be "demon word delude crowd".

Chapter 1093: His Name Shakes the Echelon!

Atop the snow-capped mountain peak, a frigid wind blew snowflakes onto Meng Hao's head. They quickly melted, taking with them some of the warmth inside of him. The resulting sensation was one of icy coldness.

The coldness caused Meng Hao's somewhat blank eyes to suddenly clear. As he regained his senses, the incredible transformations to the lands of the Ninth Nation ceased.

"The world has invisible natural laws...." he murmured.

"On top of natural law is the omnipresent power of Essence.... Understanding something's intrinsic qualities, and seeing its true origin, knowing EVERYTHING about it... that is its Essence." Although his journey from the bottom of the mountain to the top had seemed to go quickly, in truth, it had taken quite a bit of time.

That contradiction actually led him to significant enlightenment regarding Mount Whiteseal and the Ninth Nation. However, he still felt as if there were some areas he hadn't been able to probe. There was something about this mountain, this nation, and even this Realm, that was... incongruous.

It was as if there was a power of rejection, a power that, despite Meng Hao's observations of natural laws and Essence during his trip up the mountain, ensured that his understanding was merely superficial. Now that he thought back, he realized that there was nothing profound or important imprinted in his heart.

After a moment of thought, he looked around at the snowflakes covering his field of vision and drifting down onto his body.

The ground was covered with a thick layer of snow that quickly captured any snowflakes which landed on it. They lost any ability to dance or flutter, no matter how much the wind blew to pick them up.

However, no matter how much his vision was obscured by the

snowflakes, he could still see that up ahead of him was... a statue.

It was a statue surrounded by swirling snow. It depicted a man, apparently middle-aged, with a slight smile on his face. He didn't seem powerful or solemn, but a sharp gleam could be seen in his eyes that appeared to be an admonishing expression. Anyone who caught sight of the statue would be inwardly shaken.

It was the kind of feeling a mortal would experience upon facing a wild beast.

It was as if this person's wrath could cause Heaven and Earth to crumble, could shake the world, could cause all living things to bow in worship. Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked at the statue; it almost seemed to be looking back at him.

That simple gaze caused his mind to reel, sent his cultivation base into chaos, and caused his qi and blood to seethe. He coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward several paces, his face flickering.

"Just what Realm was this person in?" the thought. "It's only a statue, so it could only have a tiny percentage of the true self's power, and yet its divine will is shocking!"

"Wait a second, that's not right. This feeling... is so familiar!" His eyes flashed as he looked up at the statue, and then a strange expression appeared in his eyes.

"I was called here by this statue...."

"Furthermore, the power that injured me didn't come from the statue, but rather... the entire Ninth Nation!" His eyes glittered as he turned to look out at the entire Ninth Nation.

"That was... the power of the National Fate. The reason it feels so familiar is because this place is the same as the Tower of Tang!! Or perhaps it would be better to say that the power of the Ninth Nation's qi flow, when combined, allows this statue to radiate astonishing pressure!"

"The Windswept Realm has nine nations, and each one... has a bit more than ten percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!"

“The reason I experienced that sensation of rejection is because... I’m not an entity of the Windswept Realm!

“Well, now that I’m here, there should be some method to get rid of the power of rejection, and attain the approval of the National Aura!” Meng Hao looked back at the statue, and his eyes came to focus on an almost undetectable mark on the back of its hand.

Without careful examination, it would be virtually impossible to clearly make out the mark. Meng Hao’s eyes shone with determination as he formed his divine sense into a magical technique and shot it out toward the mark. However, the mark seemed impossible to break open, as if some type of seal were in place that would require several hours to break through. Meng Hao pondered silently, then suddenly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and unleashed the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex.

By now, he was very familiar with the Fifth Hex, and had been able to detect that it was useful when dealing with seals. Reverse inside and outside. Consume and spit out. It could unbind all sorts of seals!

As Meng Hao unleashed the Hexing magic, Jian Daozi and the others at the foot of the mountain looked on with fixed gazes. Jian Daozi sighed inwardly, and an imperceptible flicker ran through his eyes. Although he was incapable of making any further cultivation base breakthroughs in this lifetime, he had been able to utilize a secret magic to extend his longevity for many, many years.

In fact, he had lived for so long that he had long since forgotten exactly how old he was. Furthermore, he would never be able to forget how Immortals trampled the inhabitants of the Windswept Realm beneath their feet, humiliating them. He would never be able to forget how it felt to be treated like a slave.

“Perhaps if I hadn’t met THAT person... then I wouldn’t have such feelings,” he thought. “After all, the Windswept Realm is one of the Lower Realms of the Immortal World, and is a slave world.” He bowed his head to cover the hatred and venom that flickered in his eyes.

Soon, vigilance took over, and he looked up. All such previous looks had disappeared from his eyes, which were now filled with what appeared to be mindless veneration for Immortals.

Actually, of the countless Immortals that he had encountered, none had given him the same feeling as Meng Hao. His vigilance intensified.

“His cultivation base is profound, he is extremely cunning, and he attacks with utter ruthlessness. He... is not the type of person to be dealt with easily. However, he will most likely fall into a trance here. And even if that doesn’t happen... it doesn’t matter how strong he is, it won’t be long before the Windswept Realm’s patience will be at an end, and it will completely explode!” Jian Daozi took a deep breath, and a brilliant light flashed in his eyes before they once again returned to their previous state. He slid his hands into their opposite sleeves, then stooped over low, making himself look inconspicuous and innocuous.

“There is no member of the Echelon who will understand the statue of the Imperial Lord at a single glance. Even though some of the people who come here are aware of its secrets, and each time they come the duration grows shorter, in the end, the fastest one will take at least six hours. This Meng Hao might be incredibly intelligent, with extraordinary enlightenment, but even he would need more time....” Inwardly, he was laughing coldly as he looked up at Meng Hao on top of the mountain. Then, his face suddenly flickered, and his eyes went wide with disbelief.

It wasn’t just him. The old men behind him were staring with wide eyes, and panting.

In the moment that Meng Hao unleashed his Hexing magic on the sealing mark, he got the sensation that he was opening a door. His mind trembled, and the world shook. Countless natural laws exploded out of that door, as well as numerous Essences. They swept about, burying him, transforming into a tempest that raged in all directions.

The previously calm Ninth Nation was once again struck with incredible transformations. Mountain ranges rose and rivers changed their course. The incredible transformations caused an indescribable feeling to float up

in the minds and hearts of all living creatures in the Ninth Nation.

Meng Hao's breath came in ragged pants as the tempest swirled around him. Numerous natural laws and Essences could be seen, but soon, his eyes glittered as he realized that many of them were duplicates. The glow of augury could be seen, and soon Meng Hao was able to determine... that there were only three thousand!

Among those three thousand, the number that weren't duplicates consisted of only... three hundred!

His eyes flickered as the tempest suddenly slowed down and began to converge in front of him in the form of a flame.

The flame danced down into the statue's hand, as if it were a lamp, a lamp held by the statue!

The dancing flame cast strange light onto the statue, and when that light touched Meng Hao, he suddenly felt the power of rejection fading significantly.

He gazed at the flame, within which could be seen three hundred natural laws and Essences. Unfortunately, they weren't complete, although that was the very reason that Meng Hao was able to sense them at all.

When he caught sight of those three hundred Essences, a voice suddenly boomed out like thunder in his mind.

"Three thousand Daos. Three thousand Realms. Nine Windswept Nations. Nine Nations with three hundred Daos each. They form the World Seal.... The final three hundred Daos are located in the central temple!

"Foreigners, the more great Daos you come to understand, the more enlightenment you receive, and the sooner the day shall come in which you achieve your Dao!"

The voice was profound, but Meng Hao had no time to think about it; the flame in the statue's hand suddenly caused him to sense... vibrations coming from his Nirvana Fruit.

Those vibrations were that of desire. Meng Hao suddenly had the powerful sense that... if he could gain enlightenment regarding those three hundred Essences, then he should be able to fully fuse with his second Nirvana Fruit!

In that same moment, a beam of light exploded out from the Windswept Realm's central temple. It shot screaming through the air, causing all cultivators in the world to stare at it with wide eyes.

It caused boundless ripples to spread out, filling the sky of the Windswept Realm, enabling everyone to see several illusory mountains, all of which had huge statues on them.

Apparently, this illusory world on display... representing unparalleled heights of glory!

Suddenly, one of the statues collapsed, sending a huge boom out in all directions. Even as it collapsed, it reformed, transforming into a new statue, a statue... of Meng Hao!

An austere voice echoed out into all minds, filling all hearts: "Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation has exceeded the previous record holder. He has materialized a statue of himself, and shall be rewarded with the qi flow of the Ninth Nation!"

"Impossible!" thought Jian Daozi, shaking. Behind him, the other old men stared with wide eyes.

As of this moment, the qi flow of the Ninth Nation seemed to fully accept Meng Hao. As it swirled around him, the power of rejection vanished completely. Panting, Meng Hao looked up into the sky.

At the same time, the other cultivators and Echelon members in the other nations were completely shaken.

In the Fourth Nation stood a handsome young man, who currently had a strange look in his eyes. Balling his hands into fists, he growled, "Meng Hao. Why does his name seem so familiar?"

In the First Nation, the incomparably proud number one member of the Echelon stood in front of a similar statue, which was also shining brightly.

A ball of flame could also be seen in that statue's hand. Clearly... he had gained enlightenment mere moments after Meng Hao had.

After looking shocked for a moment, he said, "Faster than me... interesting. Well, even if he was notified about some of the secrets of this place, the enlightenment here can only be acquired by experiencing it over time."

A profound gleam appeared in his eyes, and he began to laugh. "I think this time I'll be able to add another precious item to my collection. Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation. He's from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, right? So, he must be the guy Xue'er is looking for?"

In the Eighth Nation was a young man surrounded by swirling bones. He suddenly looked in the direction of the Ninth Nation. "Meng Hao.... His surname is Meng!"

Other members of the Echelon were all similarly shocked, and for the first time, Meng Hao's name was imprinted into their hearts. They were all members of the Echelon, and were Chosen among Chosen. How could they easily back down from a challenge!?

The desire to fight rose up intensely in their hearts, inadvertently stirred up by Meng Hao.

Chapter 1094: The War of the Nine Nations Begins

A massive wind surged up. It was as if the Windswept Realm was building up power, which could explode out at any moment.

Once that power erupted, the Nine Nations would be swept into war, a war between all cultivators. It heralded... the Echelon battles!

It would determine who was truly number one in the Echelon, who was the true peak power amongst them. To become an Echelon cultivator, one had to be a Chosen among Chosen in any given Mountain and Sea. They were people who could, based on their own cultivation base... challenge experts above their own level!

Blazing suns like that were people who wouldn't easily accept being inferior to others; they were people who strove to be the champion of their generation!

Actually... despite the fact that young man from the First Mountain and Sea was publicly acknowledged as the number one in the Echelon... how could the others fear him?!

The fighting would happen one way or another. Furthermore, in the Windswept Realm... this was a chance for all members of the Echelon in this generation... to experience their first true war!

The war began in the instant that Meng Hao stepped onto the mountain peak, and the light from the central temple shot into the sky, revealing the statues.

As of that moment, Meng Hao's name spread throughout all Nine Nations, and was fixed firmly into the minds of all the cultivators from the Nine Mountains and Seas, and all of the other members of the Echelon.

It was at this point that a figure could be seen speeding along through the Fifth Nation. It was a young woman, incredibly beautiful, although frowning slightly. Behind her were eight beams of light, doggedly pursuing her with deadly intent.

Each one of those pursuing figures was in the Ancient Realm. Furthermore, these people did not have less than five extinguished Soul Lamps; rather, they were so profound as to be unreadable!

That was supposed to be an impossibility in the Windswept Realm, and yet... it clearly wasn't!

The woman was none other than the successor of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, Xue'er. As she sped along, she looked up and saw the light coming from the central temple. She saw the statues and the mountains up in the sky, and she saw Meng Hao. At long last, she also heard his name.

"Is it him...?" she thought. Despite being pursued the way she was, her eyes shone with a brilliant light, and she instantly committed Meng Hao's name to memory. Then, she continued to fly along, and her eight pursuers whistled after her as they tried to catch up.

Meanwhile, back on Mount Whiteseal in the Ninth Nation, Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked back down from the sky. The fire in the statue's hand cast light into his eyes, filling them with a strange flickering.

After a moment passed, he smiled.

"So, I broke the previous record.... I bet that really sets off the other Echelon Chosen. Well... GOOD!

"I don't care what other strange things there are in this Windswept Realm, or what Jian Daozi and his pals are scheming... they have nothing to do with me!

"I never imagined that I wouldn't even need to go to the central temple to find a method for fully absorbing my second Nirvana Fruit and... stepping into the Allheaven Immortal Realm!" Meng Hao took a deep breath. His heart burst with anticipation, and intense excitement filled him.

Without any hesitation, he stepped forward and sat down cross-legged. Next, he released Chu Yuyan from his bag of holding. After looking around for a moment, Chu Yuyan was clearly shaken. She could sense

how different the Windswept Realm was, and without any further prompting from Meng Hao, she sat cross-legged and began to practice cultivation. Her focus was now breaking through into the Immortal Realm.

Meng Hao nodded silently, then sent out his divine sense into the flame. Instantly, he could detect the three hundred great Daos inside, the three hundred natural laws, the three hundred Essences!

He had the sudden premonition that the more Essences he came to understand, the easier it would be to absorb his second Nirvana Fruit.

“If one nation isn’t enough, then it will have to be two. If all of the Nine Nations and their 2,700 Essences are insufficient, then I’ll go to the central temple, and use 3,000 Great Dao Essences to fully absorb my second Nirvana Fruit!” He closed his eyes and fully poured his divine sense into the flame.

At the foot of the mountain, Jian Daozi’s face flickered. Behind him, the other old men were staring reverently at Meng Hao. After a while, they began to disperse.

Time passed. A month went by in the blink of an eye. During that time, the Windswept Realm seemed peaceful and quiet. However, dark undercurrents swept about. Although fighting had not yet burst out between the ordinary cultivators, and the Echelon cultivators were still adapting themselves to the locale, the mortal armies of the Nine Nations had already begun to wage war.

The armies of the Nine Nations had long since prepared for this war, and now they began to march toward the center of the Windswept Realm... to the region of the central temple.

That area consisted of an enormous plain, at the very center of which was the temple, which was a restricted area. The grass on that plain was white, and the soil was black.

Also located on the central plain were nine towering pagodas. They were ancient and archaic, as if they had existed there for countless years.

Each one of the pagodas stood for one of the nations, around which the armies of the Nine Nations clustered. Each nation had over a million troops; added altogether, there were a total of nearly 10,000,000 soldiers on the battlefield.

Chaotic fighting instantly broke out. None of the nations allied with each other, ensuring a massive battle royale involving all nine of the nations.

Miserable screams rose up into the air, along with the cries of rage that came before death as countless soldiers were slaughtered. The blades and spears that they wielded seemed to indicate that their mission was to cover the black soil with blood until it turned purple.

Under the orders of their marshals and generals, the armies rapidly turned the entire area into a sea of blood.

There was no right or wrong in the fighting. No one questioned why it was happening. They simply fought an eternal battle, and sometimes, it seemed as if they weren't fighting for the right to live, but the right to die!

As the casualties piled up, the nine pagodas began to glow with the color of blood. Shockingly, the brightest glow was coming from the Third Nation, from which a pillar of blood-colored light rose up 300 meters into the air.

The blood-colored beams rising up from the other pagodas were all several dozen meters high. As for the Second Nation, the Sixth Nation, and the Ninth Nation, their blood-colored beams were only about thirty meters.

The only way to get those beams of light to climb higher... was to fight and kill!

The more enemies they killed, the higher the blood-colored beam would climb!

Almost in the same moment that the blood-colored beams rose up from the nine pagodas, the Echelon cultivators on the various National Aura mountains throughout the Nine Nations all felt the qi flow and the speed

of their enlightenment changing.

In the Third Nation in particular, the qi flow surged up, such that it seemed as if those who were there were receiving the aid of a divine blessing in terms of gaining enlightenment.

There were transformations in the other mountains as well. In the Second, Sixth and Ninth Nations, the National Aura was out of balance, causing the mountains to tremble. Apparently, the contemplation of enlightenment there was unstable, as if something were obstructing it.

The National Aura scattered, causing pressure to weigh down on the nations. The mortals could only vaguely sense it, but to the cultivators, it was very obvious.

That was especially true of the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, who were far more sensitive to it. Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu, and the other Demonic cultivators could all sense the incredible pressure, and their faces flickered as they looked off into the distance.

The pressure rapidly increased, weighing down over them like a sword. It was a very uncomfortable feeling that, if it went on for too long, would significantly restrict their cultivation bases.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he emerged from contemplation. Moments ago, he had failed in his enlightenment; not only was the task more difficult, much of the qi flow on the mountain had scattered. In addition, some of the defensive mechanisms built into the mountain had been weakened.

"Why is this happening...?" he thought, frowning. He quickly realized that he simply didn't understand enough about the Windswept Realm. He rose to his feet and looked out in the direction of the central temple.

Although it was quite a distance away, he could sense it, and knew that the armies of the various nations were engaged in bitter fighting. He could also sense the rising columns of blood-colored light.

After observing for a moment, he spent a moment in thought, and suddenly reached a new conclusion.

“The mortals’ war can influence the qi flow. The more people are killed, the stronger the National Aura will get. Conversely, if the mortal army of the nation is weakened... then the National Aura protecting the mountain will be influenced, as well as making it more difficult for me to gain enlightenment!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as they narrowed.

“But I didn’t give any orders for the Ninth Nation to send its army into battle....

“Well, no matter what, if they’re defeated on the battlefield outside of the central temple, not only will it influence the speed of my enlightenment, the defenses formed by the National Aura will also be weakened, or even disappear. If that happens... then the dangers of having the sealing mark stolen will be increased!

“Perhaps that is the whole purpose of this trial by fire?” After a moment of thought, he understood why the Mountains and Seas sent nine people. The other eight were most likely intended to be sent into battle. Although they couldn’t be used to kill mortals, they possessed many, many other methods that could let them influence the tide of battle.

“It seems I need to send some people to help with the battle. Unfortunately, I can’t go myself....” He frowned, then spent another moment to confirm his line of thinking. He couldn’t even leave Mount Whiteseal; once the process of contemplating enlightenment was begun, it could not be paused. In order to stop, he needed to be enlightened regarding at least 100 Essences.

Currently, he had only been enlightened regarding a bit more than 80 Essences. It wouldn’t be long before he reached 100.

After a moment of thought, he reached up and sliced a cut into his forehead, causing a drop of blood to fly out.

He waved a finger, sending some divine will into the drop of blood, which then expanded rapidly, transforming into an almost exact duplicate of Meng Hao

“It’s too bad I still haven’t figured out how to repair my True Self Dao clone. The only thing I can do now is make divine will incarnation clones like this.” Sighing, he closed his eyes and sent some divine sense out to continue contemplating enlightenment of the World Essence and the great Daos. As for the divine will incarnation, he turned his head and transformed into a beam of light that shot off Mount Whiteseal and into the sky.

Chapter 1095: Loathing Meng Hao!

The incarnation didn't head to the battlefield, as it didn't possess very much battle prowess; it would dissipate after a relatively short period of time. Instead, it headed to the Immortal's caves occupied by other cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Similar scenes were playing out in the other nations, most notably in the First Nation, where four beams of light sped toward the central battlefield.

Clearly, the Echelon cultivators had all realized that the mortals' war was extremely important!

Losses would result in the scattering of the National Aura, and a weakening of the defenses. If the defenses were removed... they would be in extreme danger!

In one particular mountain range in the Ninth Nation was a valley that looked like an Immortal utopia. Cultivators clustered about inside and outside the valley, staring in deathly silence at a middle-aged cultivator up ahead.

It was one of the Demonic cultivators from the Ninth Sea, who was currently reclining on a divan, surrounded by dancing female cultivators. Beautiful music drifted through the air, accompanied by birdsong and the fragrance of flowers. The entire scene was lovely.

The Demonic cultivator sighed deeply as he looked around. He still wasn't used to the situation; during the last month everyone he had encountered had looked at him with both fear and fanatical reverence.

A single word from him could cause people to commit suicide. A single glance would cause any beautiful female cultivator he saw to approach seductively and cater to his every desire. If he got irritated, everyone trembled in fear. It was as if he were the will of Heaven, and he was completely lost within that feeling.

He had never experienced anything like this back in the Ninth Sea, nor could he ever have imagined anything like it. There were simply too many

people who were more powerful than he was.

Even if he went to some remote location, perhaps he could enjoy a life like this temporarily, but someone stronger than him would eventually come along and take it all away, and then his life would return to how it usually was.

But the Windswept Realm was different, leading to a completely different mental state.

Granted, there had been some incredible pressure just now. Plus, he was a disciple of the Nine Seas God World, and understood that he had a mission in this place. However, he just couldn't hold back from indulging in the pleasures of the Windswept Realm.

As he thought about this he reached up and slowly ran his finger down the cheek of one of the beautiful women. When he saw the awe in her eyes, the Demonic cultivator laughed loudly, and was just about to say something when, all of a sudden, his face fell. He looked up and saw a beam of light flying toward him through midair, which then transformed into Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao!" The Demonic cultivator's eyes widened, and he rose to his feet, instantly on guard. Then he realized it was nothing more than an incarnation. Of course, despite being only an incarnation, it was still Meng Hao.

"Go to the central temple battlefield immediately," Meng Hao said. That simple sentence caused the Demonic cultivator's face to distort with rage.

"You don't have the right to order me around!"

"Maybe not, but I'm strong enough to kill you," Meng Hao responded coolly. His words were filled with infinite coldness. He might be only a weak incarnation that couldn't do anything to the Demonic cultivator, and yet his words were filled an inarguable murderous aura. "Go. That is your mission in this place. It doesn't matter what pleasures you've enjoyed or how much you've fallen in love with them, if you forget your mission, then there's no reason for me to keep you alive."

With that, Meng Hao spun and shot off into the distance.

The Demonic cultivator stood there silently for a moment, then threw his head back and roared. He might be furious, but he had no choice other than to comply. He flew up into the air, waved a hand, causing clouds and mist to surround him, and headed straight for the central battlefield.

Meng Hao wasn't worried that the Demonic cultivator might refuse to go. He was not the first person Meng Hao had approached, but rather, the second. The first Demonic cultivator had also erupted into a fury, but in the end, was too terrified to refuse. The second Demonic cultivator reacted in the same way as the first one had. In their own little worlds, they were like emperors, with complete authority over everything. After only a month of living like that, they had almost become lost in their own fantasies. It was something that Meng Hao found extremely frightening. In his opinion, cultivators, even Demonic cultivators, should not have allowed their mindset to be influenced in such a way in the space of just a month.

There were many things from the outside world that were the complete opposite here, and yet, it was happening within an unreasonably short period of time.

It was almost as if there were some bizarre power in the Windswept Realm that amplified one's desires by multiple orders of magnitude, making them more intense and pronounced.

"Have I been influenced as well?" he asked himself, but had no answer. With a flash, he sped toward the location of the next Demonic cultivator.

His destination was a small city, within which was a blacksmith shop. A burly man was there, bare-chested, and the clang of metal striking metal could be heard as he worked with iron. He occasionally pulled a piece of iron from a furnace, examined it, then began to strike it with a hammer.

The weather was oppressively hot, ensuring that not many people were out in the streets. When Meng Hao appeared, a tremor ran through the burly man's body, and he looked up and chuckled wryly.

This man was none other than the extremely devious and cunning burly

body cultivator from the Demonic Cultivator Horde that Meng Hao had exchanged blows with.

“You didn’t have to come personally,” the man said. “I know what my mission is. Once I finish with this sword, I’ll be on my way.” The man lifted up the bright red strip of metal he had been working with, then shoved it into cold water. Hissing sounds and steam rose up, and after a moment, he pulled the metal back out. It was a blade, riddled with tiny holes, yet overflowing with a murderous aura.

“You’re different from all the others,” Meng Hao said coolly. He looked around at the blacksmith shop, which appeared to be completely ordinary, without the slightest bit of extravagance to be seen. From what he could tell, the inhabitants of the city had no idea that this burly man was actually an Immortal.

“My desires are unique,” the man said, “and unusually strong. Because of that, they are hard to fulfill.” After a moment of thought, the man tossed the huge blade into his bag of holding, grinned at Meng Hao, and then walked out of the shop.

For some reason, the man’s style seemed to be very different from before, causing Meng Hao to stare at him for a moment.

“I hope you stay this way,” he said suddenly.

“That’s the plan,” was the reply. The burly man laughed loudly, then flew into the air. He quickly disappeared over the horizon. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, then he turned and vanished, to reappear directly in front of the man.

Although it had seemed that the man flew off toward the central battlefield, he actually ended up fleeing in the opposite direction. As soon as he saw Meng Hao blocking his way, he laughed heartily.

“Oops, I took a wrong turn! My mistake!” he said. Then he turned and headed toward the central battlefield.

Meng Hao watched him disappear. After a moment of thought, he looked back at the blacksmith shop for a moment, then left. He didn’t

force anyone else to fight. Instead, he merely inspected the Immortal's caves of the other cultivators in the Ninth Nation.

His incarnation was slowly fading away, and perhaps because of that, it was becoming more and more difficult for anyone to detect him.

He saw Bei Yu, surrounded by a sea of flowers. There were also countless cultivators and mortals who were tending to the flowers like gardeners, while Bei Yu practiced cultivation in the middle. Although the entire scene seemed harmless at first, Meng Hao was able to see that the seeds of desire were slowly taking root within her.

He found Fan Dong'er, whose situation was quite unique. Not a single person could be found in her vicinity, and in fact, she had placed herself in secluded meditation, choosing to have no contact whatsoever with the outside world.

He stood outside her Immortal's cave for quite some time, watching thoughtfully. Eventually he left.

Just before his incarnation faded away, he found the only other human cultivator besides Fan Dong'er, the young man from the Nine Seas God World. In general, he appeared to be refined and even scholarly, and yet the world he had created was like a scene from hell.

The mortals there trembled, and the cultivators were in terror as they excavated Immortal Jade out of an enormous mine!

When Meng Hao saw the Immortal jade, his mind trembled slightly, and he began to pant. It was as if some enormous power had surfaced in his mind, urging him to instantly slaughter the young cultivator and take all of the Immortal jade for himself.

The impulse rose up without any warning, and was so strong that Meng Hao's eyes were instantly shot with blood. His cultivation base surged, and he waved his hand, causing incredible pressure to weigh down on all life forms in the area. Their minds reeled, and a bellow of rage could be heard as the young cultivator suddenly flew up into the air.

"Meng Hao, what are you doing!?!?" he roared. Meng Hao's incarnation

suddenly collapsed into pieces, transforming into nothing more than ash. It wasn't something done intentionally; rather, the incarnation had reached its limit, and the surge of Meng Hao's cultivation base had caused any remaining life force it had to vanish.

The young man stared in shock for a moment, and then his face darkened. He looked in the direction of Mount Whiteseal and snorted coldly before floating back down to the ground.

Back on Mount Whiteseal, Meng Hao was seated cross-legged next to the statue. Suddenly, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his face went pale. He opened his eyes, and a shocked expression could be seen on his face.

He immediately performed a double-handed incantation gesture to ensure that his contemplation of enlightenment was not interrupted. If a backlash during the process of contemplating enlightenment of Essence did not destroy him in body and soul, it would still shatter his cultivation base.

Enlightenment like this could not be interrupted; complete focus was required.

"It's like I wasn't under control of myself!!" he thought, shaken. "As soon as I saw that Immortal jade, the impulse I felt was too strong. It was... indescribable. Most terrifying of all was that in that moment, I didn't even have the inclination to fight back against it." He took a deep breath, suddenly aware of how truly mysterious the Windswept Realm was. Furthermore, he had the feeling that he was probably being influenced in certain ways that he wasn't even aware of, perhaps from the moment he had arrived in the Windswept Realm.

His heart had grown colder than it usually was, and the thought of that... caused him to tremble.

"Desires are amplified.... Thankfully, that was an incarnation, and it ended up self-destructing. If it had been my true form...." He could only imagine what would have happened in that case.

After a moment of silence, he once again immersed himself in

contemplation. However, the vigilance in his heart remained at a peak.

Back on the mortal battlefield in the central district, the three Demonic cultivators had joined the fray, easing some of the tension. However, it didn't take long before cultivators from the other nations arrived, and the fighting grew more chaotic. The Ninth Nation was having trouble mustering its National Aura, causing them to suffer more defeats. In fact, of all the blood-colored beams, theirs was the lowest.

It was at this point... that the gaunt youth in the Eighth Nation, the one surrounded by bones, suddenly stood up. He was the first one to gain complete enlightenment of 100 Essences.

Furthermore, he ceased any continued efforts at gaining enlightenment, and turned toward the Ninth Nation, his killing intent rising high.

“Meng Hao. Surnamed Meng... That's the family name I hate more than any other!” With that, a flash could be seen as he shot toward the Ninth Nation, killing intent seething.

“Either way, you'll be the first to die. I'll take your sealing mark, and cut you down! I, Han Qinglei, will get the glory for slaughtering someone else in the Echelon!” 1

*

1. Han Qinglei's name in Chinese is 韩青雷 hán qīng léi. Han is a common surname. Qing is a color, which could be blue, green, cyan, azure or even black. Lei means “thunder” or “lightning”.

Chapter 1096: Han Qinglei!

When Han Qinglei, the Echelon cultivator from the Eighth Mountain, gained enlightenment of 100 Essences, a bright beam of light rose up from the temple in the middle of the crowded central battlefield with its millions of soldiers.

Colors flashed in the sky, and once again, the images of mountains and statues appeared up above. This time, another of the statues collapsed, to be replaced by the image of Han Qinglei.

“Han Qinglei of the Eighth Nation has broken the previous record, gaining enlightenment of 100 Essences, and shall be rewarded with a blessing of qi flow!”

As the ancient voice echoed out, red light erupted up from the Eighth Nation’s pagoda. It exceeded 300 meters and rapidly approached 450 meters. At the same time, the Eighth Nation’s qi flow increased, ensuring that the Mountain of National Aura’s defenses were increased to a terrifying degree.

Currently, the cultivators from the other nations were shaken. All eyes turned toward the Eighth Nation as Han Qinglei’s name became the second to rock the entire Windswept Realm!

Meanwhile, near the central temple, the red light shining from the Ninth Nation’s pagoda was growing increasingly weak. The overall strength of the Ninth Nation was weakening, and Mount Whiteseal’s defenses were substantially reduced.

Meng Hao’s contemplation of enlightenment was going worse than ever, and he was incapable of stopping. He was now on his 98th Essence, and the enlightenment was slow in coming. All the while, he had to be very wary of the powerful influence of the Windswept Realm itself, which tried to incite his desires and lead him astray.

As the qi flow of the Ninth Nation faded, the influence of the Windswept Realm increased. Fan Dong’er and the others could sense this. Most importantly, the desires in their hearts grew more intense. If they couldn’t

understand the reason behind it, they would merely grow more frenzied, more lost. However, those who eventually reached an understanding of what was happening were terrified.

That was especially true of Fan Dong'er. She coughed up a mouthful of blood in the middle of her Immortal's cave, and her face revealed traces of panic. She had been the first among the group to sense the massive change in her inward desires, which was why she had chosen to go into secluded meditation in an attempt to gain control. As of this moment, however, the opposite was happening; she was on the verge of losing control.

As for Bei Yu, she sat in the middle of the sea of flowers, seemingly completely entranced. From the look of it, her entire body was in the process of merging into the sea of flowers, as if she herself were turning into a blossom among the sea of flowers!

At the same time, a bright beam containing countless bones shot through the air above the Eighth Nation at top speed. A day later, it reached the border between the Eighth and Ninth Nations. Without the slightest hesitation, Han Qinglei shot across the border, laughing maniacally as he burst into the Ninth Nation.

He wore a black robe, and was very gaunt; the murderous aura which surrounded him erupted explosively.

In almost the exact moment that he entered the Ninth Nation, Mount Whiteseal shook violently, and the defensive pressure of the Ninth Nation increased dramatically.

However, such pressure did nothing to Han Qinglei. Laughing uproariously, he shot out over the lands, a bright beam of light surrounded by innumerable illusory white bones. Shrill screams could be heard echoing out from the bones as he sped forward; the sky dimmed and winds swirled.

Black clouds spread out across the skies of the Ninth Nation, and all the lands were cast into shadow.

The murderous aura which erupted off of Han Qinglei was like a

tempest as he shot toward Meng Hao!

As he passed along, the earth quaked, and all cultivators and living creatures in the Ninth Nation shook. From their perspective, the previously bright and sunny day had instantly turned as dark as night.

“Meng Hao, you’re DEAD!” he shouted, his voice echoing out as he increased his speed. He was like a lightning bolt that rapidly drew closer to Mount Whiteseal.

As he neared, the Ninth Nation’s National Aura dissipated even more rapidly, and the pressure grew more intense. Fan Dong’er once again coughed up a mouthful of blood, and suddenly looked off into the distance.

“What’s happening? What caused the influence to increase so much, and so quickly?!” She gritted her teeth and flew out of her Immortal’s cave. When she looked up into the air, her face flickered as she saw the roiling black clouds off in the distance.

Inside of those black clouds were countless bones, speeding toward the capital city, and the Ninth Nation’s Mountain of National Aura, Mount Whiteseal!

Fan Dong’er wasn’t the only shocked one. Bei Yu sat in the sea of flowers, an expression of struggle on her face. She forced her eyes open, and a tremor ran through her as she looked around. Then she started to struggle even harder.

In another area, in the Immortal jade mine, mad laughter rang out. It was a laughter of satisfaction and joy as the young cultivator from the Nine Seas God World was completely lost inside of himself. As he looked around, all he saw was endless Immortal jade.

“Wealth like this will make my cultivation base vastly more powerful!!”

As for the burly body cultivator and the other Demonic cultivators on the central temple battlefield, all of them were shaken inwardly, and their desires stirred to mad heights.

Heaven wished them dead, but first, it would drive them mad! 1

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the roiling black clouds sped from the border of the Ninth Nation all the way to Mount Whiteseal. The clouds acted like flesh, and the countless bones formed together into what looked like real bone structures. The entire thing transformed into a huge black fist!

It was fully 300 meters wide, shooting down from the sky toward Mount Whiteseal in a deadly strike!

“Time to die, Meng Hao!” he howled, voice sinister and full of killing intent. Everything shook as the fist descended toward the mountaintop, and Meng Hao, sitting there cross-legged by the statue.

By this point, Meng Hao had just gained enlightenment of the 99th Essence, and was very close to completing the entire process of the first stage. All he needed was one more Essence, and yet, because of the fading of the Ninth Nation’s National Aura, the enlightenment was very difficult and slow in the coming.

Rumbling could be heard as the fist smashed down toward Mount Whiteseal. All of a sudden, the statue began to glow, sending out a protective shield that covered the entire mountain, Meng Hao included.

The huge pitch-black fist slammed into the shield, causing a deafening boom to echo out. Colors flashed, and the lands trembled. Intense ripples spread out, along with cracking sounds, as a huge crack appeared in the shield. It quickly repaired itself, but based on the speed with which it did so, it was obvious that the shield would only hold out for so long.

The fist shattered into fragments, but it was, after all, just formed from clouds and some bones. Han Qinglei appeared, then transformed into a black bolt of lightning which smashed into the shield.

“OPEN UP!!” he roared. Although he was gaunt, he radiated terrifying energy. His cultivation base was only in the Immortal Realm, but he was capable of rocking the Ancient Realm!

An intense power radiated out from him... causing countless bolts of lightning to spring up. Shockingly, they rapidly transformed into nine Lightning Dragons.

Mount Whiteseal shook, but Meng Hao remained there with his eyes closed tightly. He could not halt his enlightenment before it was complete, and he was focusing his mind in an attempt to speed it up as much as possible.

“Give up!” Han Qinglei roared. “You’ll die today, and the Ninth Nation’s World Seal will be mine! I’m also going to wipe out your Echelon qualifications!”

“I, Han Qinglei, was the first to reach a full 100 Essences! I can kill anybody, but the main reason I’m picking you is because you’re surnamed Meng!”

“After you die, remember to tell your ancestors that the person who killed you was Qinglei of the Han Clan!”

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, Fan Dong’er appeared in midair. Killing intent swirled in her eyes, and the wave of her hand caused numerous imprints of magical items to appear on her body. They rapidly expanded, as the hundreds of magical symbols grew to the size of a small mountain.

The sight was monumentally shocking.

Fan Dong’er had no choice but to show up. She knew that if she didn’t, and the attack against Mount Whiteseal succeeded, the World Seal would be taken away. The result would be that she could no longer resist the influence of the Windswept Realm without any National Aura.

She could also see that Meng Hao was at a critical juncture, and wouldn’t be able to do anything, so she had no choice but to interfere, for her own sake.

“If I can just buy enough time, Meng Hao will come out eventually. This guy might be powerful, and might be in the Echelon, but Meng Hao is too!” Gritting her teeth, Fan Dong’er closed in and attacked Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei’s eyes flashed as he caught sight of Fan Dong’er, and he smiled.

“You think a bit too much of yourself,” he said, his voice booming like

thunder. “I think I need to show you why people like you... don’t even qualify to fight the Echelon!” He waved his right index finger, sending four roaring Lightning Dragons toward Fan Dong’er.

Simultaneously, rumbling sounds could be heard as Bei Yu, no longer in the middle of the sea of flowers, also closed in at high speed. One of her eyes was confused and vacant, but the other was clear, and even before she was close, she shouted out, causing invisible divine sense power to coalesce into a needle, which stabbed viciously toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei’s face flickered, and he waved his left hand, sending four more Lightning Dragons charging out. The fifth, he caused to self-detonate, borrowing the explosive power to fight back against the power of Bei Yu’s divine sense.

“How amusing. Two beauties have teamed up to fight me. I almost don’t have the heart to say so, but I can tell you that I look forward to flaying the two of you alive and revealing your true beauty; your white bones. How entrancing that will be!” Han Qinglei’s eyes gleamed with a bloodthirsty light, and he licked his lips. Suddenly, a flash could be seen as he... transformed into three people!

One was his true form, the other two were clones!

All three licked their lips simultaneously. One attacked the shield, and the other two split up to handle Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu respectively. As explosions filled the air, expressions of disbelief appeared on the faces of Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu. Despite the fact that they were both fighting mere clones of Han Qinglei, to the two of them, it felt like they were fighting someone... vastly more powerful than them!

“Is everyone in the Echelon this strong...?” thought Fan Dong’er. Shaken, she looked over at Meng Hao sitting there cross-legged in meditation.

“Hurry it up, Meng Hao!!”

1. This quote “Heaven wished them dead, but first, it would drive them mad!” is very similar to a quote from western literature. However, after a bit of research, it seems to actually be a reference to something said by Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty. None of this is really relevant to the plot of ISSTH, but since I did all the research I figured I would share the results.

Chapter 1097: Valiant!

Han Qinglei, Echelon cultivator from the Eighth Mountain, was so powerful that Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu were both completely shaken. To them, any person who could rock the Ancient Realm while being in the Immortal Realm well-deserved to be referred to as a blazing sun.

As far as Fan Dong'er was concerned, Meng Hao was actually more powerful than those blazing suns. But now that she had met Han Qinglei, she had to admit that he was terrifyingly powerful.

The sensation she had experienced when fighting Meng Hao had now appeared for a second time.

"Are Echelon cultivators powerful... because they're in the Echelon, or is it... their power that earns them a place there!?" Fan Dong'er couldn't quite accept it. She was the Divine Daughter of the Nine Seas God World and before meeting Meng Hao, she had viewed herself as being above all others, the center of all attention. However, Meng Hao's appearance on the scene had changed everything.

Even now, she could remember the first time she had met Meng Hao back on Planet South Heaven. Back then, he hadn't been as terrifying as he was now. Furthermore, the speed with which he had risen to prominence made the entire situation difficult to accept. Before she could even come to terms with it, he was already far ahead of everyone else. Wherever he went, he became a huge mountain blocking the paths of everyone else.

A boom rang out, and blood oozed out of Fan Dong'er's mouth. She fell back at top speed, waving her hand to cause numerous sealing marks to appear. They merged together in front of her to transform into a magic bottle, which then shot toward Han Qinglei's hideously grinning clone.

Han Qinglei's clone laughed coldly and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, a flower of white bones materialized. It spun through the air, radiating a white light as it slammed into the magic bottle. Massive rumbling could be heard as Han Qinglei shot forward. As he extended his hand, the flesh and blood suddenly

transformed into bleached bones. He touched Fan Dong'er's forehead and a boom rattled out. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she went pale white as freezing cold spread through her. Her vision swam, and a sensation of crisis welled up. Suddenly the air behind her shattered, and a female corpse appeared. Fan Dong'er had kept the corpse hidden up to now, but because the blow had sent her mind into chaos, she could do so no longer. Immediately, an aura of death exploded out, completely astonishing Han Qinglei. Being the cautious person that he was, he immediately fell back.

In that same instant, the space he had just occupied was inundated by countless black strands of hair, which then exploded out in all directions.

"Interesting," the clone said, smiling. "It seems I'll need to take things a bit more seriously." Off to the side, his second clone was steadily forcing Bei Yu backward.

Bei Yu's divine abilities and magical techniques caused rumbling sounds to fill the air. Her divine sense magical art sent innumerable invisible needles stabbing forward in attack. However, the mere wave of a hand by Han Qinglei's clone caused a suit of bone armor to appear. He allowed the divine sense to strike him, and it did nothing. Then, the bone-armored clone stretched out both hands, and his fingertips turned into sharp claws which he waved through the air like the weapons of a celestial warrior. Instantly, Bei Yu was put into a very dangerous position.

Meanwhile, Han Qinglei's true form was performing numerous incantation gestures to unleash all sorts of divine abilities. Bright, multicolored lights slammed into the protective shield, causing it to twist and warp. Cracking sounds could be heard, and more fissures spread out.

Meng Hao continued to sit there cross-legged beneath the statue. He was currently contemplating the final Essence, and at the same time, was feeling extremely anxious. However, there was nothing he could do but focus all of his power and energy on the enlightenment.

All of a sudden, Han Qinglei and his two clones suddenly stopped in place and fell back. All three figures then flew toward each other and,

instead of merging together, smiled viciously and then levied palm strikes against each other's chests!

At the same time, the three figures cried out: "Three Body Dao!" At the same time, an unbelievably powerful sound like a crack of thunder rang out.

After striking each other with their palms, the three figures' cultivation bases rocketed up, and their battle prowess increased dramatically! In fact, in this state... they were apparently more powerful than Han Qinglei when he was not split into three!

"Bone Tomb Magic!" The three figures split apart and shot toward Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu, and Mount Whiteseal's shield, bursting with incredible energy.

They moved so fast that they looked like black arrows, and in the blink of an eye, one of the figures was in front of Fan Dong'er. He waved his hand, causing countless white bones to descend, which then transformed into the shape of a tomb, with Fan Dong'er stuck in the middle.

A similar bone tomb appeared around Bei Yu, and another one descended toward Mount Whiteseal.

The three Han Qingleis all cried out together: "Three Body Dao! Bone Tomb Magic! Slaughter By Time!" Their voices echoed out, seemingly ancient and filled with the aura of Time.

The three bone tombs rumbled as they began to spin. Shockingly, bone headstones appeared on top of each of them, upon which shapes began to form, as if images of Bei Yu, Fan Dong'er, and Mount Whiteseal were being etched on their surfaces!

The image of Bei Yu was the first to be completed. A miserable shriek rang out, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. Instantly, her body began to wither, and she seemed to be crumbling under intense pressure. She was incapable of escaping, trapped in the pressure of the bone tomb as it pushed her down toward the surface of the ground.

It was... turning into a real tomb!

Inside the tomb, Bei Yu was ashen, losing consciousness, her body rapidly aging as her life force was sucked away.

Fan Dong'er struggled to fight back, but she was no match. Despite the boundless will of death from the female corpse, she couldn't fight back against the pressure. Rumbling could be heard as Fan Dong'er was forced down toward the ground, crushed by the bone tomb. Her life force slowly began to flow away, and she began to age.

"Meng Hao!!" she cried urgently, and yet, her cry was quickly cut short.

At the same time, the third bone tomb was crushing down onto Mount Whiteseal's protective shield. Because of the losing battle on the central battlefield, the shield had been greatly weakened, and so under this attack the already-fractured shield instantly fell to pieces and was destroyed.

Fan Dong'er was being crushed. Bei Yu had lost consciousness. Mount Whiteseal's shield exploded. From all of these, it was possible to see exactly how powerful Han Qinglei was, and also, how strong Echelon cultivators were!

Each and every member of the Echelon was an incredibly powerful expert, someone who was above all other blazing suns. Furthermore, the only people of their generation who qualified to fight Echelon cultivators... were other Echelon cultivators!!

"Alright, Meng Hao, let's see how you fight back this time! Killing you like this might be a bit of a bore, but considering that you're surnamed Meng, even if you aren't connected to the Meng Clan, I'm elated to have the chance to slaughter you!" Han Qinglei laughed uproariously, and killing intent roiled up from his three bodies. As Mount Whiteseal's shield shattered, he instantly pounced down toward Meng Hao!

However, in almost the exact moment that he closed in, Meng Hao's right hand slapped down onto his bag of holding. Then, he waved his hand, sending numerous black pods flying out, his eyes tightly shut the entire time.

Magic Pod Soldiers!

Popping sounds could be heard as the black pods transformed into vicious imps, who screeched as they opened their mouths to reveal long, sharp teeth. There were a total of fifty blackpod imps, and as soon as they appeared on the scene, they shot toward Han Qinglei's three bodies.

"That's all you've got?!" Han Qinglei laughed coldly. Despite his words, he was inwardly vigilant. He had in no way underestimated Meng Hao, as he knew that weaklings would never be able to get into the Echelon.

Although he wasn't sure what exactly was so special about these blackpod imps, the fact that Meng Hao had unleashed them at such a critical point in the battle led Han Qinglei to believe that they were not something to be taken lightly. On the surface, he seemed to be acting rashly, but it was actually his clone that shot forward first, while his true form held back.

The fifty blackpod imps screamed as they shot through the air toward the clone. A boom could be heard as more than thirty were sent tumbling away, although they didn't seem to have received very serious injuries.

Han Qinglei was instantly shocked, and his eyes widened. As for the dozen or blackpod imps that remained on the clone, they opened their mouths wide and began to chew into it.

Han Qinglei snorted, allowing the clone to block the blackpod imps as his true form and his other clone closed in on Meng Hao.

"Those blackpod imps are pretty impressive, Meng Hao. After I kill you, I'll collect them up as souvenirs!" Han Qinglei and his clone increased their speed as they charged toward Meng Hao.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao. He was at a critical juncture, and was just a sliver away from achieving complete enlightenment. Han Qinglei wasn't giving him enough time! It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly heard a deep growl, as if something which had long since been sleeping in his bag of holding were finally beginning to wake up.

It was a very familiar feeling, and after a moment of considering, Meng Hao realized that it was... the aura of his Blood Mastiff!

“Is the mastiff going to wake up?!” he thought, his mind spinning. However, what appeared was not the mastiff. Instead, as his bag of holding opened up, an archaic voice echoed out, accompanied by the sound of flapping wings.

“Yo! This mountain belongs to Lord Fifth, the Heavens belong to Lord Fifth, the Earth belongs to Lord Fifth, and this little Haowie is also Lord Fifth’s! Lord Fifth has appeared! Are ya scared?!” The parrot flew out in between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei, one wing flapping madly in place, the other pointing out accusingly at Han Qinglei.

On the parrot’s ankle was a bell, upon which the face of the meat jelly appeared, which proceeded to yell in an attempt to sound archaic as well. “That’s right! This mountain belongs to Lord Third too, the Heavens belong to Lord Third, and the Earth also belongs to Lord Third. Haowie is also Lord Third’s. Are ya scared?! Well, are ya?!”

“Screw off!” said Han Qinglei, smiling coldly. The killing intent in his eyes exploded to incredible heights. Everything shook, a massive wind kicked up, and the darkness intensified. A huge hand appeared, formed of countless bones and filled with a frigid wind. Surrounded by a sea of bones, it shot forward.

The parrot immediately flew forward and slammed into the sea of bones. The result was that several of its feathers, which weren’t incredibly numerous to begin with, were knocked off of its body. It watched the feathers floating down toward the ground, and began to tremble. Finally, it threw its head back and let out an unprecedentedly bloodcurdling howl.

“Dammit! DAMMIT!” the parrot raged. “Y-y-you... you actually knocked some of Lord Fifth’s feathers off! AAAAGGGHHHHH! My feathers! AAAAAGHHHHHHH! My beautiful feathers! That’s how I attract lovers.... I’m ruined, I can’t handle this! I’m gonna flip my lid! This is beyond ridiculous!!

“Summon the seafood! Seafood dishes, ASSEMBLE!”

Chapter 1098: Blades Clash!

The parrot was infuriated. It didn't have too many feathers to begin with, and it believed every single one of them to be very precious. They might all be different colors, but that didn't make them any less valuable. Together, they represented the parrot's ability to attract other luxuriantly furred and feathered beasts.

But now some of those feathers had been knocked off, which to the parrot, was the same as being disfigured!

It was sure that lacking those feathers would result in the scorn and mockery of any furred or feathered beasts it met in the future. Therefore, its rage surged into the Heavens.

In response to its roar, Han Qinglei frowned, but didn't pause for a moment in his charge toward Meng Hao. However, all of a sudden, numerous black beams of light shot out behind the parrot. In the blink of an eye, a large group of Demonic cultivators had appeared.

These Demonic cultivators were not in human form. Instead, they looked like an assortment of seafood. There were shells, shrimp, crabs, a sea turtle....

"It's time to sing for Lord Fifth!" the parrot squawked. "This bastard dared to ruin some of my feathers. Crush him!"

In response to the parrot's orders, the Demonic cultivators immediately formed up and began to sing. "I was a bad kid when I was young, I'm a little seafood dish, lalalalala, little seafood dish, dobedobedoooo, little seafood dish...."

When Meng Hao had listened to this song before, he always assumed that it was simply uncomfortably discordant. However, when the group started singing this time, all of a sudden, thunder began to rumble, and bolts of lightning instantly shot down toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei's face flickered with shock, and he fell backward in retreat, staring at the clamorous parrot and his singing seafood dishes. He began

to pant in disbelief as the singing apparently began to affect the natural laws and Essence of the Windswept Realm.

A powerful energy of expulsion began to gather around Han Qinglei, causing his face to fall.

“What is that thing!?” he gasped, looking at the parrot in astonishment. Thunder crashed, and wild colors flashed in the sky. Black clouds gathered, and numerous lightning bolts converged. Han Qinglei’s scalp began to go numb.

A single glance told him that this song was completely beyond ordinary, as if it had become the Heavenly will of the Windswept Realm, and could control natural laws, and even Essence, something terrifying to the extreme.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but even more shocking to Han Qinglei was that the singing instantly caused moisture to build up in the area. Apparently, the song was able to materialize a sea, complete with raging waves.

“Impossible!!” he cried. The parrot looked extremely pleased with itself, and whooped out in excitement.

“Scared yet? Dammit! You dared to pluck some of Lord Fifth’s feathers! You dared to ruin Lord Fifth’s good looks! Lord Fifth isn’t gonna let you off the hook!”

More lightning and thunder crashed as the group switched songs.

“I’m your little, dear little seafood dish! However I love you, it’s never too much. I’m your little, dear little seafood dish! Seeeeaaaaafoooooood DISH!”

The change in the song caused the sea to churn. Furthermore, mountains appeared up in the sky which began to crush down toward Han Qinglei. The booms from the mountains crashing against the ground almost sounded like musical instruments, pounding out a rhythm to go along with the song.

“Spell formation?! It’s a spell formation that incites the Essences of Heaven and Earth!?!? What... what kind of bird is that?!?!” Han Qinglei’s

face flickered with continuous astonishment and shock as he finally realized that he was facing a spell formation. However, he had never before heard of any type of spell formation that was unleashed by singing.

He had definitely never heard... of any type of spell formation that could incite Essences of Heaven and Earth. A spell formation like that would be exceedingly rare, the stuff of legends.

Rumbling filled the air, and Han Qinglei's face went ashen. He fell back again, avoiding the falling mountains. His mind reeled as the seafood group once again changed songs.

"We're seafood dishes! We're seafood dishes. Waaaaaaaaaaaa! Great and mighty Lord Fifth. Whoaaaaaaaaaaaa! Great and mighty Lord Third...."

The instant the lyrics rang out, the parrot began to glow with blinding light, as if the song were boosting its power. Shockingly, Essences and numerous natural laws began to swirl around, making the parrot look like some sort of divine being. It let out a squawk, which turned into an attack like a powerful arrow that shot toward Han Qinglei.

"You dared to spoil Lord Fifth's good looks!" it raged, its voice echoing out with thunderous, domineering power. "Lord Fifth is gonna screw you!"

However, it was at this point that the meat jelly attached to the parrot's ankle suddenly began to speak in a very solemn tone. "You can't curse people. Cursing is wrong. You should say that you will slay him, not that you will screw him. Screwing is wrong. Screwing is immoral!" 1

"Shut the hell up!" the parrot roared, shooting toward Han Qinglei. "Lord Fifth is gonna screw this guy!"

Han Qinglei's face fell. "Dammit, it can actually power itself up too!!" He suddenly felt as if his entire world had been turned upside down. He had never seen a spell formation that operated on singing. Nor had he ever seen a bird as arrogant and aggressive as this. He most definitely had never seen a bird that roared about screwing things.

"Well so what if you can incite the Essence of Heaven and Earth!? That power comes from the spell formation, and those Demonic cultivators

aren't powerful enough to keep it running for long!" Han Qinglei gritted his teeth and waved his hand, sending his second clone charging toward the parrot. Then he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a throne of white bones to appear. At the same time, a huge throng of skeleton warriors also materialized.

Some of the skeletons were black, and held long bone spears in their hands. They led the other skeletons in a charge against the parrot. When the two forces slammed into each other, a huge boom echoed out.

Countless bones shattered, and the throne exploded. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture then waved his finger, ripping the air open. Immediately, a bone hand stretched out and swiped viciously toward the parrot.

The parrot squawked, and the singing of the seafood dishes grew more intense. As for the parrot, it attacked wantonly, piercing through the bone hand to appear directly behind Han Qinglei's clone, whereupon it charged viciously toward his rear end.

Han Qinglei's clone looked on in shock, and suddenly dispersed. When he reformed some distance off, the parrot let out another furious squawk and charged him again.

It was clearly a dangerous situation, but Han Qinglei's true form simply chuckled coldly. A derisive look appeared in his eyes as one of his clones handled the blackpod imps, and the other took care of the bizarre bird.

"Nine Windswept Nations, each with 300 great Daos. The final 300 are located in the central temple. A total of 3,000 great Daos, and whoever gains enlightenment of the most will be able to enter the central temple. Now the time has come... to give me the Ninth Nation's World Seal!" Chuckling coldly, Han Qinglei's true form flashed through the air toward Meng Hao, extending his right hand as if to touch Meng Hao's forehead.

"DIE!"

Even as Han Qinglei's finger closed in on Meng Hao, all of a sudden, the tinkling of a bell could be heard coming from the parrot's ankle. The bell vanished, reappearing between Meng Hao's forehead and Han Qinglei's

finger in the form of a fist-sized meat jelly, which slammed into the finger.

The meat jelly was soft but also elastic. Within that elasticity was an incredible toughness which instantly blocked Han Qinglei's finger.

A boom could be heard, and the meat jelly let out a roar. It looked angrily at Han Qinglei and said, "You're a bully!!"

Han Qinglei stared in shock. He was quickly coming to the realization that Meng Hao had a boggling amount of bizarre items at his disposal. First were the blackpod imps, next was the terrifying parrot, and now was this strange meat jelly that had the face of an old man.

"SCREWWWW OFF!" Han Qinglei roared. He was reaching the limit of his patience. He could never have anticipated that after handling Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu, he would shatter the shield only to face so many setbacks in trying to kill Meng Hao.

His hand suddenly flashed to the side, striking at Meng Hao from a different angle. However, no matter how he varied his moves, the meat jelly always blocked him. Furthermore, it continued scream miserably and to berate him loudly.

"Bully! You're nothing but a bully!

"Lord Third converts bullies like you! Bully! Lower your weapons and allow the great and mighty Lord Third to help you become obedient, kind, and upright!

"AAGGHH! You're still hitting me?! Bully! Bully! BULLY! BULLY!!!"

Han Qinglei was on the verge of going crazy. Letting out a furious howl, he performing an incantation gesture, materializing a divine ability. Countless bone swords appeared which stabbed toward Meng Hao. It was at this point that the meat jelly transformed into a huge canopy which completely covered Meng Hao and blocked all of the bone swords.

"Lord Third is starting to get pissed off! What are you doing, huh? Hey, what are you doing! You big bully!"

Han Qinglei was thoroughly enraged at having been repeatedly forced to

waste so much time. Eyes gleaming with a bizarre light, he suddenly clenched his hand into a fist. As he did, the flesh and blood vanished and became nothing but bleached bones.

He punched out, not with the power of the fleshly body, but with an incredibly powerful divine ability. It slammed into the meat jelly, who let out a miserable shriek. Its body shrank down defensively. Suddenly, a derisive grin appeared on Han Qinglei's face.

Eyes glittering he said... "Time... stop!"

When those two words left his mouth, everything around him suddenly seemed to grind to an eternal halt.

Everything went quiet. The meat jelly was stuck in midair, and only Han Qinglei seemed to be unaffected. His face was pale, however; clearly, using this Daoist magic was not an easy thing for him.

The instant that time stopped, his eyes glittered with killing intent. His hand changed angles, slipping around the meat jelly's defenses and rushing directly toward the top of Meng Hao's head in the form of a fist.

"It's over!" he said. However, just when his fist was about to strike Meng Hao's head, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and they gleamed with a murderously cold aura.

His right hand shot up, leaving behind afterimages as it sped to meet Han Qinglei's fist!

Their eyes suddenly locked.

One of them had a look of shock, the other had a cold gleam in his eyes.

At the moment, one of them looked vicious and cruel, and as for the other, the coldness in his eyes was like that of a sharp blade!

*

1. In the line about "say that you will slay him, not that you will screw him," it's kind of funny because the word for "slay" contains the

character translated as “screw.” Similar to English, this “screw” is kind of a slang usage, so the character in question could mean a lot of different things depending on context. Combine it with another character and it means to kill someone or get rid of them.

Chapter 1099: Victory!

Their eyes met, their fists slammed into each other, and a huge boom echoed out between the two of them. It resonated up into the Heavens, silencing the entire world. A massive wind kicked up, and nearby mountain peaks shook violently.

The shaking caused crevices to open up in the ground. The meat jelly returned to its normal state, and, seeing that Meng Hao had awoken, quickly retreated.

Han Qinglei was hit by a huge backlash, shoving him backward. The air was ripped to shreds as a succession of nine booms echoed out before Han Qinglei finally ground to a halt, his face ashen, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth.

Meng Hao was also shoved backward; he now hovered in midair, his face slightly flush, but his eyes as sharp and penetrating as ever!

"You're right, it is over," he said coolly, "... for you! I've had enough of your crap!" He suddenly shot forward like a lightning bolt, using his unique battle style, charging Han Qinglei in an overwhelmingly domineering fashion!

His cultivation base exploded with power; moments ago during that critical juncture, he had finally gained enlightenment regarding the 100th Essence, and was able to come to his senses.

Han Qinglei's face fell, but he didn't retreat. Gritting his teeth, he also shot forward in attack. Booms rang out as they met in midair, exchanging hundreds of moves in a few seconds.

Meng Hao waved his hand, causing numerous mountains to descend, crushing down onto Han Qinglei. Han Qinglei performed an incantation gesture, summoning his throne of bones, along with countless other white bones, all of which formed together into a huge bone giant that attacked the mountains.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort and advanced, transforming into a golden

roc. A brutal air rose up as he slashed his claws viciously at Han Qinglei. Rumbling sounds echoed out as Han Qinglei performed another incantation gesture. This time, a swarm of bone swords materialized, forming layers of walls that blocked Meng Hao and fought against him viciously.

Booms echoed out in all directions, the air distorted, and the sky dimmed. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth, and Meng Hao's golden roc faded away. However, in that same moment, Meng Hao's right hand clenched into a fist.

The Life-Extermination Fist!

Up to this point, Meng Hao still had not revealed any hint that he practiced body cultivation. He had only attacked with divine abilities and Daoist magics. Now that he was using this fist, Han Qinglei's face instantly fell.

"A body cultivator!" he gasped. As the fist neared him, he shrieked and quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing multiple bone shields to appear. However, no matter how many of them appeared, all of the shields collapsed, layer after layer, until the fist slammed into Han Qinglei.

BOOM!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he tumbled backward, completely astonished by Meng Hao. However... he was still filled with the desire to do battle.

One punch sent Han Qinglei falling backward. Meng Hao didn't immediately pursue him, but instead waved a finger toward the two bone tombs, causing them to explode. Fan Dong'er appeared, face pale, just having regained consciousness. On the other side, Bei Yu was completely pale and still unconscious.

"Time magic...." Meng Hao murmured. He performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger, causing the air around Bei Yu to distort. A feeling like that of Time radiated out, causing Bei Yu to immediately recover.

Meng Hao had a deep understanding of Time, but wasn't able to actually manipulate its flow. However... what he was doing now was not that. Instead, he was simply breaking Han Qinglei's magical technique.

"You definitely deserve to be in the Echelon like me..." Han Qinglei said. "In that case, let's fight!" He wiped the blood from his mouth and chuckled. Eyes burning with intense killing intent, he shot toward Meng Hao in a flash of light.

This time, his two clones threw their heads back and roared, then burned their life forces to shove the blackpod imps away and knock the parrot aside. They joined Han Qinglei's true form to charge Meng Hao.

The parrot was still furious, but after a moment of thought, it wasn't confident enough to pursue the clone. Instead, it angrily shouted, "Haowie, crush him to death for me! That damned bastard dared to ruin Lord Fifth's good looks! I want him screwed! In fact, why don't you screw him for me... wait, no. Don't screw him, I want the first go!"

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face as he looked over at the parrot. After thinking about how the parrot had protected him just now, he cleared his throat and nodded.

Next, his cultivation base erupted with power. 123 Immortal meridians surged. 33 Heavens descended with full power. The aura of an Immortal Emperor radiated out, transforming into a tempest that rose all the way up into the sky. Meng Hao hovered in the middle of it all, his hair flying about, his eyes glittering like lightning as he exuded a massive pressure.

"You want to fight? Fine, let's fight!" he said, his voice booming like thunder. This was the most formidable member of his own generation that Han Qinglei had ever encountered. Even as Meng Hao's words rang out, his three bodies arrived at Meng Hao.

The three figures slapped their palms together.

"Three Body Dao!"

"Bone Tomb Magic!"

"Slaughter By Time!"

Their cultivation bases rocketed up, causing them to look like three long spears stabbing toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao's face was calm, and he did not fall back. Instead, he took a step forward. Massive winds surged around him as he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out.

Bedevilment Fist!

The striking fist caused colors to flash in the sky, and at the same time, a will of self-immolation to the point of Bedevilment exploded out. That fist seemed to represent the darkness of night. The sky above turned black, and the darkness of a Devil crushed down onto the lands.

BOOOOMMMMMM!

As the fist struck out, and darkness fell, Han Qinglei's three forms transformed into a huge bone tomb. However, that tomb instantly collapsed into pieces, and the Time magic inside was shattered.

Blood sprayed out of the three figures' mouths as they fell back. However, their will to fight was as strong as ever.

"Meng Hao, you qualify to see my complete state! Three Body Unification!" Han Qinglei threw his head back and howled. At the same time, his two clones began to glow with boundless light. In the blink of an eye, they shot toward Han Qinglei, merging into him, forming a shocking...

Three-headed, six-armed figure!

The three heads radiated an intense murderous aura as the six arms all performed incantation gestures, unleashing divine abilities and Daoist magics with unmatched speed.

Han Qinglei transformed into a beam of light that burst with energy as he shot toward Meng Hao.

Instantly, the two of them slammed into each other. Meng Hao was a master of devious divine abilities. He attacked with ruthlessness, and even when injured, would not retreat. He was constantly on the offensive, his Eternal stratum in full operation, his secret Immortal meridian technique ensuring that the power of any divine ability or Daoist magic he used was amplified.

Furthermore, he also wielded the power of an Immortal Emperor. That made his magical techniques even more powerful. Every attack he made could cause the sky to fade. Han Qinglei was now completely shocked.

Meng Hao's way of fighting, his constant aggressive attacks, turned into a heavy pressure that weighed on the mind, and seemed to give him more powerful momentum. Han Qinglei was being forced back, and thus losing any opportunity to land a decisive strike.

"Dammit, how can this Meng Hao be so strong!?" Han Qinglei's face fell, and he gritted his teeth. Six arms all performed incantation gestures, causing a shocking, magical wheel to appear in front of him!

The wheel was not complete, and in fact, only about ten percent of its full state was corporeal, with the rest being illusory. Numerous magical symbols covered it, and it emanated an ancient and primordial aura.

This was the Paragon magic that Han Qinglei had used to earn his spot in the Echelon. The Wheel of Time!

This wheel had a mysterious origin, and had the power to manipulate Time. Because of it, Han Qinglei had been enlightened regarding Paragon magic, and was endowed with a mysterious might.

"Paragon magic, Dao of Time!" Han Qinglei's hands flashed with incantation gestures, and the magical wheel began to rotate. Time seemed to flow, spinning toward Meng Hao, ripping open the air as it neared him. Shockingly, numerous images manifested by Time appeared, filling the area with countless scenes of the past eras from the surrounding lands.

"Paragon magic, huh...." Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph. He waved his right hand, and the sky trembled. A huge bridge descended, which was none other than... the Paragon Bridge!

As soon as the Paragon Bridge appeared, the magical wheel trembled, as if... it wasn't even able to match up!

Han Qinglei's face fell. As the two Paragon magics collided, everything trembled violently. It almost seemed as if the world was going to collapse. Intense shaking filled all of the cultivators in the Windswept Realm.

Rumbling booms could be heard as the magical wheel collapsed. Although the Paragon Bridge was slightly shaken, it continued to emanate intense pressure. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth, and his body began to fall apart. Two of his heads exploded, and three of his arms were destroyed. Although he let out a miserable shriek, his will to fight had not left him.

His remaining three arms performed incantation gestures, and threw his head back and roared. All of a sudden, a bone statue appeared in front of him, emanating an astonishing aura. This was one of his trump cards, a bit of good fortune that he had acquired. Now that he was using it in battle, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to appear.

"Essence? Impossible!!" For the first time, Han Qinglei was inwardly shaken, and felt terror rising up in him. This fear was something that caused Han Qinglei to feel extremely humiliated. He was in the Echelon, and yet here he was, scared of someone else in the Echelon. He wanted to pull his emotions into check, but just couldn't stifle his terror.

"There are a lot of things which you might think are impossible, but really aren't," Meng Hao said coldly. "You just lack experience."

As he closed in on Han Qinglei, the world trembled. Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu looked on with complete shock. They knew Meng Hao, and yet were still astonished. It was as if Meng Hao... was even more powerful than they had imagined!

It was as if in this battle, Han Qinglei was completely suppressed, totally on the defensive. In fact, the awe-inspiring way he had fought against them moments ago now seemed like nothing.

Han Qinglei was forced into retreat over and over. His face fell, and soon he began to laugh bitterly. However, his eyes gleamed with focus.

"You're strong," he said, "much stronger than I imagined. You're surnamed Meng... but there's no way you could have anything to do with the Meng Clan. However... it will definitely be amusing to kill you with one of the Meng Clan's own divine abilities!" Laughing maniacally, he

extended his right hand and waved a finger through the air.

“Azure Lightning!” 1 As he spoke, his body trembled, and blood sprayed out of his mouth, as if making this attack pushed him to the boundary of his limits. Innumerable lightning bolts crackled around him, spreading out, transforming into a lake of lightning. Up in the sky, a bolt of azure lightning crackled down, connecting to Han Qinglei, causing his energy to rise dramatically.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and a sensation of imminent crisis welled up in him.

“Meng Clan....” he murmured, face flickering. As Han Qinglei’s energy spiked, Meng Hao took a deep breath and suddenly stepped forward.

That step caused everything to shake dramatically. At the same time, a massive foot appeared in the sky, crushing down toward Han Qinglei, instantly interfering with his rising energy!

Shockingly, Meng Hao was now unleashing the divine ability he had acquired from Su Yan, the Seven God Steps magic!

The second step caused the entire world to tremble, and the wind to churn violently.

Meng Hao didn’t stop. He took a third, a fourth, and a fifth step. Each step caused wild energy to surge up around him. It wasn’t his own energy, but energy from the magical technique, summoned from the void, from the world, from Heaven and Earth!

When Su Yan had used the Seven God Steps on him, Meng Hao had been thoroughly shaken. She even used it to resist his Paragon magic. That was what had originally caught his interest, and was also why he had chosen to take this particular Daoist magic from her.

Of all the Daoist magics he was familiar with, none could compare to the Seven God Steps in terms of the momentum it could unleash. This magic... was a Dao of momentum!

As he took those five steps, nothing about him looked out of the ordinary. However, for some reason, the feeling he gave off was that he

existed above Heaven and Earth. Massive energy swept out and crushed down toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei's face drained of blood. His Azure Lightning was based on energy, and caused the will of lightning inside of him to form together into Heavenly might, which he could then use to crush his enemy.

But now, he was shocked to find that Meng Hao was even more powerful than that!

"Impossible!!" he gasped. Then Meng Hao took a sixth step, and finally, a seventh. He now seemed vastly higher than anything in existence. Heavenly might formed a gigantic foot that crushed down onto Han Qinglei.

"NO!!!" he cried miserably. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing Azure Lightning to shoot out from him toward the descending foot.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

When they slammed into each other, the foot crushed the lightning without even pausing and kept going, stomping viciously down onto Han Qinglei. A huge boom could be heard, and the lands quaked. A gigantic footprint appeared between Mount Whiteseal and the capital city of the Ninth Nation, which sunk deeply down into the earth.

Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth, and his body withered. His aura was severely weakened as he stood there in the middle of the footprint. Laughing bitterly, he crushed a jade slip, which caused a mist to appear that surrounded him and carried him away rapidly.

He was fleeing, and it caused his heart to drip with blood. He was utterly humiliated by his complete and utter defeat in battle. He had been the invader in this instance, and also the one to flee. He had never imagined that he would be forced to escape via this particular jade slip during a battle with someone of his own generation. And yet, here he was, fleeing in the face of death by crushing that jade slip.

"Think you can just leave?" Meng Hao said, appearing in midair, his face

somewhat pale. This battle had been somewhat difficult, but it was nothing compared to the deadly ambush set up for him by the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

With a cold snort, he waved his hand, and a strange light began to gleam in his eyes. He suddenly waved his finger toward Han Qinglei.

“A Writ of Karma!” he said, his voice echoing out, filled with sternness, austerity, and holiness....

“Call upon Karma to form ties of destiny! You owe me money!”

*

1. Don't forget that Han Qinglei's name literally means “azure lightning”.

Chapter 1100: Fate!

Meng Hao had sown Karma with the other Echelon cultivators using A Writ of Karma when he was the first person to break through the previous record atop Mount Whiteseal. At that time, his name was spoken throughout the Windswept Realm, everyone came to know him, and invisible connections of Karma were created.

Using Karma in such a way was completely domineering. In fact, before Meng Hao created A Writ of Karma, nothing like it had ever existed.

Based on the enlightenment he had experienced at that time, and his own personality and requirements, he had created a completely unique and domineering Daoist magic, something that could forcefully create ties of destiny.

It was impossible to evade or resist. Furthermore, as long as Karma had been sown, it would definitely be reaped!

Even as he fled, Han Qinglei felt a tremor run through him. All of a sudden, he felt as if his fate were being adjusted. The abrupt sensation caused his heart to begin to thump.

He wasn't sure why, but he suddenly couldn't think about anything except Meng Hao. Meng Hao's name seemed to fill his mind, almost like a curse weighing over him.

"What's going on!?! I owe him money?!" Han Qinglei's face fell, and he wanted to struggle, but found that he couldn't. To his terror, his mind and heart were filled with Meng Hao. Most horrifying of all were the words that were echoing out like thunder in his mind.

You owe me money.

You owe me money!

YOU OWE ME MONEY!!

The voice boomed like thunder, and caused Han Qinglei's face to grow even paler than before.

“What magical technique is this?! Dammit!!” He was completely alarmed to realize that this was a type of magic that he had never even heard of before.

When Meng Hao waved his finger, the entire world changed in his eyes. Everything shook and time seemed to slow to a crawl. Faintly, he could see numerous Karma Threads stretching away from the heads of everyone visible. Han Qinglei himself had an abundance of Karma Threads, so many that it made it difficult to distinguish the individual threads. However, there was one thread connecting him to Meng Hao.

That thread might not bind them together very strongly, but it was there, glowing with intense light. A Writ of Karma.... The deeper the relationship between the caster and the target, the stronger the Karma Threads. The stronger the Karma Threads, the more domineering the effect of the magical technique.

“The first thing that happened was you learned my name,” Meng Hao said somberly, his expression dignified, as if he were describing some holy aspect of Heaven and Earth. “Then you were completely defeated by me. What’s happening right now can be described as Karma!

“Karma serves as destiny. Heaven and Earth bear witness. An indelible brand is created, which manifests as a promissory note. The day your debt is paid back, the Karma will be dispersed!” He waved his hand as if he were writing something, and then, colors flashed in the sky, and the wind screamed. Booms rang out, as if lightning and thunder were bearing witness to the Karma between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei let out a miserable shriek. Despite the fact that he was surrounded by mists, and shooting away at top speed, his mind still filled with a roaring like that of thunder. At the same time that Meng Hao unleashed his magic, Han Qinglei felt a faint aura being pulled up out of his body.

It was an astonishing sensation, and also horrifying. He had the sudden premonition that Meng Hao was marking him in a way that would affect him for the rest of his life.

“NO!” he roared. However, struggling was useless. By now, he had no choice but to ignore the shame he felt. His body trembled, and he wanted nothing more than to be gone from this place. His terror regarding Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle, and for the first time, he felt complete and utter regret for ever having chosen to attack the Ninth Nation and Meng Hao.

The parrot hovered not too far off, watching the scene with entrancement. It was envious, extremely envious. Of all the Daoist magics that Meng Hao was able to wield, A Writ of Karma was the only one that it felt to be breathtakingly beautiful, and the parrot almost couldn't control itself whenever it saw it in action.

The meat jelly was also envious, and wished that it could have such a Daoist magic. If so, whenever it met bullies, it would use A Writ of Karma on them, and things would go much smoother as a result.

Fan Dong'er had an unsightly look on her face. Although she was currently on the same side as Meng Hao, when she saw A Writ of Karma in action, she couldn't help but think about certain things which had occurred in the past. 1

As for Bei Yu, she had regained consciousness earlier and had seen most of the fight between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei. Now, she watched as Meng Hao, looking like the very picture of holiness, unleashed A Writ of Karma. She almost couldn't imagine what kind of person would go to the lengths of creating a magical technique like this, just to get people to owe him money.

Not only that, when he unleashed the magic, he was filled with a look of piety....

Meng Hao actually did feel very pious right now. His righteous and reverent voice echoed out across the lands:

“Henceforth, you owe me money! The compound interest shall not be altered! One year, twofold! Ten years, a hundredfold. One hundred years, ten thousandfold! Karma Thread, form the promissory note. NOW!”

As his dignified words echoed out, Meng Hao clenched his hand

viciously onto Han Qinglei's Karma Thread. It twisted and distorted, letting out brilliant light. In the blink of an eye, the light formed together into a writ, formed from Daoist magic.

It floated gently down toward Meng Hao, who took hold of it gingerly, as if it were a precious treasure. When he saw the numbers written on the note, he cleared his throat and added it to the thick stack of other notes in his bag of holding.

In the moment that the promissory note appeared, Han Qinglei coughed up a mouthful of blood. He could clearly sense that the aura which had left him moments ago indicated that he had entered some sort of agreement with Meng Hao.

That agreement was almost like one of indentured servitude. Most importantly, he had no control in the matter, and had been forced to sign the agreement! Regardless of whether he agreed to it or not, he now owed Meng Hao a vast amount of wealth.

If he didn't pay it back, then due to Karma, his cultivation base and his future would all be subject to unforeseen changes. A situation like this, and a Daoist magic like this, caused Han Qinglei to tremble violently. In his terror, he suddenly recalled a terrifying sort of Daoist magic.

"Fate!! This is a magic of Fate! He... he actually knows Fate magic!! This is impossible! In all of Heaven and Earth, from ancient times until now, no one has ever achieved enlightenment of the Dao of Fate!!" Blood sprayed from his mouth, and he let out a mighty roar. Finally, he pushed the mist to increasing speed, and vanished over the horizon.

"This isn't a place where you can just casually come and go!" Meng Hao said righteously. "First of all, you interrupted my cultivation. Even if I overlook that, though, how could I possibly let you go when you owe me some money!?" With that, he waved a finger toward Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu. Two streams of qi flowed into them, causing them to shudder as their cultivation bases were completely restored. They even ended up with more power than before.

"Fellow Daoists, please head to the central temple. Kill all of the

cultivators from the Eighth Nation. Weaken the defenses of the Eighth Nation's Mountain of National Fate. Assist me as I go to the Eighth Nation to wrest away their World Seal!

"If I succeed, we can all seek to gain enlightenment together! We can contemplate the natural laws and Essences of the Windswept Realm, and solidify our path to the future!" In response to his words, Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu's eyes glittered. They were intelligent people, and instantly understood Meng Hao's plan. This opportunity was definitely a rare one, and besides, Meng Hao had now offered them a promise!

The two women exchanged a glance, and then nodded. Immediately, they transformed into beams of light that shot off toward the central temple, where they would work hard to assist Meng Hao.

In the moment that Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu left, Meng Hao took a step forward, heading in the direction in which Han Qinglei had fled. He employed full speed as he raced to catch up.

"Don't run, Han Qinglei! Pay me back that money!" As his voice boomed out, the blackpod imps, the meat jelly, and the parrot all turned into beams of light that shot through the air behind Meng Hao. As for the seafood dishes, the parrot used a cosmic storage technique to tuck them away into its wings. Then, it arrogantly cried out:

"Don't run, Han Qinglei! Lord Fifth hasn't screwed you yet, how dare you flee!!"

Beams of light shot through the air, causing everything to shake. Han Qinglei was still fleeing, coughing up blood as the mist around him faded away. This was his life-saving magic, and was something that couldn't be sustained long-term. It was merely a temporary boost in speed, something that would enable him to flee from a deadly crisis.

The incredible speed ensured that he was able to leave the Ninth Nation and return to the Eighth Nation almost instantly. His face was pale, and the sensation of imminent crisis still hadn't left him. He could sense that the terrifying Meng Hao was currently chasing him down!

As soon as he entered the Eighth Nation, his voice roared out, bolstered

by a magical technique.

“Troops of the Eight Mountain, come posthaste!” His voice echoed out through the Eighth Nation to all of the other eight cultivators who had come from the Eighth Mountain. Of that group, four were fighting in the region of the central temple. Their bodies trembled, and they immediately employed their top speed to leave their current locations to speed toward Han Qinglei.

Time passed. An hour later, Han Qinglei was still speeding through the air, occasionally coughing up blood. The mist that had surrounded him and hauled him along was now completely gone. Instead, four imposing beams of light surrounded him in a protective formation as he flew toward the Eighth Nation’s Mountain of National Fate.

“I need to get back to the Mountain of National Fate as soon as possible! I can use the defensive measures there to fight back against Meng Hao. That will at least give me some time to recover from my injuries!!

“Meng Hao won’t be able to spend too much time trying to catch me. If he does, he’ll leave the Ninth Nation vulnerable to attack by other members of the Echelon!

“As long as I can buy enough time, I’ll definitely be able to get through this deadly crisis!” Han Qinglei’s eyes were crimson red as he shot through the air.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly appeared at the border between the Eighth and Ninth Nations. He looked like a celestial warrior, and as soon as he entered the Eighth Nation, all of the cultivators there could feel the pressure radiating off him, and they trembled.

“When receiving guests, it is improper not to return favors. Since you decided to come to my home and stroll around, I’ve decided to come to your home to collect my interest.” Meng Hao cleared his throat and looked somewhat apologetic, although he didn’t hesitate for a moment before heading immediately toward the Eighth Nation’s Mountain of National Fate.

Rumbling filled the air as he closed in. The pressure weighing down

from the Eighth Nation grew stronger; by this point, Han Qinglei had reached the mountain. As soon as he set foot on it, his voice rang out:

“Defend this location to the death! Don’t allow anyone to step even half a foot inside!”

*

1. In case you forgot, Fan Dong’er was the first person Meng Hao tested out A Writ of Karma on in chapter 855.

Chapter 1101: Slaughtering Into the National Aura Mountain!

Han Qinglei sat cross-legged on the Eighth Nation's National Aura Mountain, face pale, coughing up mouthfuls of blood. He nervously produced medicinal pills, which he immediately consumed. Not only had his little excursion resulted in significant loss, he was now being chased by Meng Hao. However, in all of the Windswept Realm, there was no safer place for him to be than on this National Aura Mountain.

As he sat there cross-legged, his wounds slowly began to heal. At the same time, the four middle-aged cultivators from the Eighth Mountain and Sea remained outside of the mountain, both on guard, and at the same time, looking at each other in dismay. All of them were clearly shaken.

They knew Han Qinglei, and they had never encountered a member of the current generation who could outmatch him in this way.

Therefore... seeing Han Qinglei's injuries left them completely unnerved. After all, they were aware that he had previously headed toward the Ninth Nation.

"Was it the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Mountain who did this? Meng Hao...?"

"It must be him! Han Qinglei was heading toward the Ninth Nation, so they must have ended up fighting!" The four took deep breaths, and their expressions turned very serious.

However, they had no choice in the matter. Regardless of whether it was because of their mission, or the effect it would have on their own chances for success in the Windswept Realm, giving up was not an option.

Time passed, and the four men kept their cultivation bases rotating the whole time. Soon, a bright streak of light appeared on the horizon, and before they could even react, massive rumbling sounds filled the air.

It was none other than Meng Hao!

After entering the Eighth Nation, he had caused an enormous pressure to spread out over the entire nation, in much the same way that Han Qinglei had when he had entered the Ninth Nation. The feeling experienced by Fan Dong'er and the others was now occurring among all the members of the Eighth Nation.

The four men's faces flickered as they looked toward Meng Hao. Before Meng Hao even made a move, the four men clenched their jaws tightly and performed incantation gestures to summon divine abilities.

In unison, the men howled: "Four Holy Beasts Formation!"

The sky flickered, and the earth quaked. These four men were not in the Immortal Realm, but rather, the Ancient Realm!

All of them had cultivation bases with five extinguished Soul Lamps, which was the absolute limit for the Windswept Realm. Their attack caused a massive wind to spring up and roaring sounds to fill the air as a huge White Tiger appeared.

The White Tiger was fully 300 meters long, and was clad in a suit of armor. It radiated a terrifying energy, along with a towering murderous aura.

Next was a Black Turtle, extremely domineering and fierce. It was surrounded by rushing black waters, which roiled up into the Heavens. A seemingly infinite power seemed to surround it as an illusory land mass appeared beneath its feet.

Next was a Vermilion Bird, surrounded by a majestic sea of flames that rose up into the sky. Last was an Azure Dragon, whose roars caused the heavens to distort. All four Holy Beasts materialized, causing lightning to dance and extraordinary energy to surge.

"Four Holy Beasts Destruction!" the four cultivators roared. Immediately, the images of the four Holy Beasts roared and leaped toward Meng Hao amidst churning, seething clouds. The speeding White Tiger was the first to arrive, bursting with a murderous aura.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he gave a cold snort as he stepped

forward and waved his hand. Immediately, the Mountain Consuming Incantation materialized, causing countless mountains to descend, crushing down onto the White Tiger. Rumbling could be heard as the tiger was pinned in place. Meng Hao subsequently descended, then reached out and viciously smacked the tiger on the head.

The smack caused a huge tremor to run through the White Tiger, after which it let out a miserable shriek. Finally, its head exploded, and one of the four cultivators coughed up a massive mouthful of blood.

However, despite losing its head, the White Tiger wasn't dead. After all, it wasn't a real animal, but rather, a magical construct. It still slashed out ruthlessly at Meng Hao with its claws.

An ear-piercing sound like that of metal grating against metal rang out. However, Meng Hao wasn't hurt in the least bit; his fleshly body was already in the Ancient Realm, so how could this White Tiger possibly harm him?

The White Tiger froze in shock, and the four cultivators defending the National Aura Mountain were astonished.

"His fleshly body...."

"Dammit, what fleshly body is that?! He actually wasn't hurt at all by the White Tiger!"

As their hearts trembled, Meng Hao grinned viciously and charged forward, slamming directly into the White Tiger's chest. The Mountain Consuming Incantation was unleashed again, but this time, the mountains didn't descend from the sky. Instead, they burst out from inside the White Tiger. A boom could be heard as the sharp mountain peaks stabbed out through its body, prompting a bloodcurdling shriek. In the blink of an eye, its massive frame was ripped into shreds by the numerous mountains.

The cultivator in control of the White Tiger coughed up more blood, and trembled violently. Cracking sounds could be heard as bones were shattered, and the man very nearly passed out.

He looked at Meng Hao with complete terror and astonishment as he

finally realized how Han Qinglei came to be injured so badly. Obviously, Meng Hao was so much more powerful than Han Qinglei that... it was almost impossible to imagine!

Before they could even unleash more divine abilities, Meng Hao turned into a sharp arrow that stabbed toward the roaring Black Turtle.

The turtle was incredibly tough, surrounded by black waters, and standing on top of a huge landmass. All of that made its defenses incredibly high. However, Meng Hao pierced through all that, slamming into it and causing a miserable shriek to ring out. Cracks spread out over the entire Xuanwu turtle, and in the blink of an eye, the black water faded. The land collapsed, and the entire Xuanwu turtle exploded into bits!

It was thoroughly smashed, incapable of standing up to Meng Hao whatsoever. In the same moment, blood sprayed out of the mouth of the cultivator in control of the Black Turtle. He instantly began to shrink back and tremble, and an expression of shock covered his face.

The two remaining cultivators roared, causing the Vermilion Bird and the Azure Dragon to also roar, then swirl together in a combined attack to block Meng Hao's progress.

It was like a dragon and a phoenix attacking together, causing their power to rocket up. The sea of flames surrounding the Vermilion Bird filled the sky, burning everything above and below, threatening to completely eradicate Meng Hao.

As the intense heat caused everything to ripple and distort, Meng Hao smiled.

"Flames?" he said. Without the slightest hesitation, he took a step forward and then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, a ball of flame appeared in his hand.

It was none other than... the Essence of Divine Flame!

He squeezed down, and the ball of flame exploded, sending boundless Divine Flame swirling around him. As the Vermilion Bird closed in, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Divine Flame to surge outward. In

response to Meng Hao's thoughts, the swirling Divine Flame also transformed into a Vermilion Bird.

Two Vermilion Birds slammed into each other in midair, sending a huge boom echoing out in all directions. Meng Hao's Divine Flame Vermilion Bird completely vanquished the Four Holy Beasts Vermilion Bird, completely burning it up!

Vermilion Birds were born amidst flames, and despite being a magical construct, this Vermilion Bird had some of the true will of an actual Vermilion Bird. However, only a bloodcurdling scream could be heard as it was reduced to nothing but ash. The cultivator controlling it coughed up a mouthful of blood. Blood also oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The backlash caused flames to surround him, completely eradicating him in body and soul.

All of these things take quite some time to describe, but actually occurred in the space of only a few breaths of time. Of the Four Holy Beasts, three were now completely eradicated, leaving only the Azure Dragon behind. As it closed in on Meng Hao, he made a grasping motion, causing the bone-tip spear to appear.

This spear's haft was crafted from the World Tree, and the bone spearhead was long and sharp. A murderous aura radiated out from it, causing everything in the area to turn as cold as the dead of winter. Meng Hao glanced at the Azure Dragon, then hurled the spear toward it. The spear pierced out, slashing a hole into the air as it sped toward the Azure Dragon.

Looking shocked, the Azure Dragon waved its tail in an attempt to brush the spear aside. However, as soon as its tail made contact, it shattered into pieces. The spear moved with shocking speed, leaving behind afterimages as it stabbed into the Azure Dragon with incredible power. The Azure Dragon could not even fight back as the spear slammed it into the ground.

A huge boom rang out as the Azure Dragon was pinned to the ground, causing a huge crater to appear.

Blood sprayed out of the mouth of the cultivator in control of the

dragon, and his face turned ashen. Meanwhile, Meng Hao had already reached the National Aura Mountain, whereupon he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out.

The statue on top of the Eighth Nation's National Aura Mountain suddenly flickered with bright light, and a bright shield appeared to block Meng Hao's punch. The resulting backlash was so intense that Meng Hao had no choice but to fall back several paces, frowning.

Almost in that same moment, the surrounding three cultivators clenched their jaws, ignoring the incredible pressure weighing down on them and any potential injury, and charged toward Meng Hao, unleashing divine abilities the entire way.

"Screw off!" growled Meng Hao, waving his arm. Rumbling filled the air as an incredible power surged out, slamming into his three opponents. Blood instantly spurted out of their injuries, and two of them were killed instantly. The remaining cultivator's face went pale, and he retreated in shock.

Meng Hao did nothing to pursue him. Instead, he clenched his right hand into a fist and struck the shield again. His eyes glittered, and a faint, cold smile could be seen on his face.

Inside the shield, Han Qinglei sat beneath the statue, face pale, but fully focused on recovering from his injuries.

Around this time in the Seventh Nation, the Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain, Lin Cong, was standing in a bronze war chariot as it sped forward. He wore a white robe, and his expression was one of surprise. However, he also radiated indescribable power, as well as supreme confidence in himself and his cultivation base. 1

"So, you're delivering up a plump gift for me, eh Han Qinglei?" he murmured, eyes glittering. He looked at the jade slip in his hand and laughed.

"From the fluctuations, it seems that Han Qinglei and Meng Hao are fighting already.... Well that's fine. After the two of them have worn each other down, then I can easily snatch the World Seals of two nations. I

don't care what plot Han Qinglei has brewing, he's not strong enough to go up against me. I'll crush him as easily as a dried weed!"

Chuckling coldly, Lin Cong sent his war chariot speeding forward. Massive ripples spread out, and at the same time, he flexed his cultivation base, causing a domineering air to spread out. It was as if he were announcing to the world: Lin Cong is coming!

He was also using his status in the Echelon as a threat!

He emanated crushing power, and had incredible self-confidence, the result of a series of random events that had led to him fighting against the number one member of the Echelon. Although he had been defeated, that cultivator had personally told him that he was the most powerful person he had ever fought!

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The four beasts in this chapter are common Chinese mythological creatures. More information here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Symbols_\(China\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Symbols_(China))

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1. Lin Cong appeared before in chapter 1058 and chapter 1090. His name in Chinese is 林聰 lín cōng. Lin is a surname which also means "forest." Cong means "intelligent".

Chapter 1102: Han Qinglei's Plot!

Meng Hao hovered outside of the National Aura Mountain, coldly eyeing Han Qinglei inside of the shield. Currently, he could only look at him with his bare eyes; divine sense could not penetrate the shield.

The only thing he could see was Han Qinglei sitting there, treating his injuries.

Meng Hao wasn't anxious. At the moment, the shield protecting the Eighth Nation's National Aura Mountain was intact, and would not be easily damaged. However, he was confident that the shield would soon begin to weaken.

And that was exactly what happened. In the region of the central temple, Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu instantly tipped the tide of battle in favor of the Ninth Nation. They immediately issued orders to begin a full-scale assault on the Eighth Nation. Cultivators from both sides began to fight, and the Eighth Nation began to suffer defeat after defeat. The pillar of red light shining above their pagoda began to sink down rapidly.

As it did, the shield surrounding their National Aura Mountain began to ripple. Soon, it was visibly growing thinner, causing Han Qinglei's eyes to widen with shock. From the look of it, this was not what he had anticipated happening, and it caused him to stare murderously at Meng Hao.

When their gazes locked, Meng Hao suddenly got an uneasy feeling. Han Qinglei's expression seemed to be the appropriate one, but Meng Hao simply couldn't believe that Han Qinglei, being qualified to join and maintain his position in the Echelon, would be so easily defeated. People like him would definitely have tricks up their sleeves.

It would be impossible for him to have overlooked the fact that if he retreated here because of being pursued by another, that this safe haven could be weakened because of the situation on the central battlefield.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he clenched his right hand, unleashing the Life-Extermination Fist onto the shield. The shield continued to hold

strong, making it impossible for him to observe Han Qinglei with divine sense. Therefore, he decided that he might as well just do his best to destroy the shield; then all would be laid bare!

Booms filled the air, and the shield rippled. Meng Hao transformed into a gust of wind, battering the shield with fists and magical techniques. Soon, the shield was flickering with colorful lights, and emanating constant booms.

Han Qinglei's face fell as he looked at the shield. He knew full well that it wouldn't be able to last for very much longer, and that once it was broken open, there would be nothing stopping Meng Hao. Han Qinglei gritted his teeth, and an expression of determination appeared on his face. Suddenly, he began to laugh maniacally.

"I never imagined that I, Han Qinglei, would be forced into such a tight spot. Meng Hao... you're definitely strong enough to be in the Echelon. You might not be a match for the number one Echelon cultivator, but you're probably powerful enough to fight with Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain.

"I didn't want to have my cultivation base breakthrough so soon, I was planning to hold off for a bit longer. I have no desire to be a first Echelon cultivator to break through to the Ancient Realm. After all, the more deeply you prepare in the Immortal Realm, the more powerful you will be after your breakthrough!

"But since you've pushed me this far, fine. I'm going to break through, and then we'll resume our battle!" Even as his words continued to echo about out, Han Qinglei performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then pushed his palm down onto his chest, causing cracking sounds to echo throughout his body. The aura of a cultivation base breakthrough exploded out, merging with the Windswept Realm as a whole.

Meng Hao's eyes widened, and his uneasy feeling got even stronger.

"When I wasn't attacking, his expression seemed normal. But that's not right. As soon as I attacked, he saw the shield falling apart, and then suddenly chose to make a cultivation base breakthrough...." Meng Hao

frowned, but didn't stop unleashing attacks. More distortions appeared on the shield, and cracking sounds could be heard as fissures spread out. As the Eighth Nation suffered successive setbacks in the battle near the central temple, the red light shining from their pagoda continued to fall. At the same time, their shield grew weaker and weaker.

A boom could be heard as a huge crack spread out from where Meng Hao's fist had just slammed into the shield, piercing halfway into it. Soon, the Eighth Nation's beam of red light was the weakest among all of the Nine Nations. Meng Hao threw his head back and roared, unleashing the Essence of Divine Flame, causing popping sounds to ring out from the shield.

More cracks appeared, and then, in the blink of an eye, the shield collapsed into countless fragments, sending a shockwave sweeping out in all directions.

The shockwave was intense, but Meng Hao pierced through it, finally setting foot onto the Eighth Nation's mountain. He instantly sent his divine sense sweeping out toward Han Qinglei to determine whether or not his suspicions were valid.

However, in the moment that his divine sense was about to touch him, Han Qinglei's cultivation base erupted with the aura of a breakthrough. Colors flashed and the wind screamed, and soon, the power of the great Door of the Ancient Realm began to descend, scattering Meng Hao's divine sense.

Although all of this seemed coincidental, it all aligned with his suspicions. Everything seemed to make sense. In fact, he could now see that nothing which was happening was coincidental, in fact... it was the opposite!

Meng Hao's body blurred as he shot toward Han Qinglei, whose cultivation base was rising rapidly into the Ancient Realm. Seeing Meng Hao closing in, he clenched his teeth and, even while breaking through, performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger at Meng Hao. Immediately, illusory white bones appeared, which shot toward Meng Hao.

Behind the bones was a magical Wheel of Time, yet another unleashing of Paragon magic. Numerous divine abilities all struck out toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling echoed about, but Meng Hao didn't pause for a moment. He waved his right hand, summoning the Paragon Bridge. Next was the raging Essence of Divine Flame, which swept out in all directions. The illusory white bones were shattered, and the magical Wheel of Time was destroyed.

At the same time, Han Qinglei threw his head back and roared, causing azure lightning to strike down and fuse with his body. Then he extended his right hand and pushed it out toward Meng Hao.

The gesture caused his entire right arm to explode into a cloud of blood and gore. Shockingly, a bolt of azure lightning filled with a strand of blood shot out from the remnants of his destroyed arm. Instead of shooting toward Meng Hao, though, it exploded, transforming into an azure shield that surrounded Han Qinglei, the statue, and the entire mountain.

At the same time that the azure lightning transformed into a shield, Han Qinglei threw his head back and roared. The breakthrough energy became more and more powerful, and up above, the energy of Heaven and Earth formed together into something that looked like a huge door.

"You can't do a thing to me now, Meng Hao!" Han Qinglei cried, laughing uproariously.

However, in the exact moment that his words rang out, Meng Hao suddenly blinked his right eye nine times, causing the starstone there within to melt and then rapidly spread out to cover his entire body. In the space of a few breaths, he completely transformed into a planet.

This was none other than the Fang Clan Daoist magic... One Thought Stellar Transformation!

The sudden appearance of this technique caused Han Qinglei's eyes to widen. He hadn't seen Meng Hao use it in their previous encounter, and now, his heart started to pound. Before he could even do anything in response, Meng Hao in planet-form shot forward like a meteor. Anything

standing in his way was like rotten wood, and he instantly slammed into the azure lightning shield.

A huge boom rang out as the shield shattered into pieces and Meng Hao burst in. The planet vanished, and Meng Hao appeared in normal form once again, directly in front of Han Qinglei. Instantly, his hand shot out and latched onto Han Qinglei's neck.

Han Qinglei could do nothing to block him, and his breakthrough process was interrupted.

"I knew it!" Meng Hao said calmly. As soon as his hand had touched Han Qinglei, his divine sense flowed through it and swept through Han Qinglei.

"You were aware the entire time your so-called breakthrough would fail.. In fact, you never even intended to break through!

"That's because this isn't even your true form. You're nothing but a clone!

"You tried to hide that fact from me with the aura of a breakthrough, plus, you kept my divine sense stuck outside your shield so that I couldn't see the truth."

"So what if you know?!" said Han Qinglei, laughing loudly, his expression one of derision. "My true form has long since fled! You won't be able to find him any time soon. Besides, you don't even have the time to go looking!"

No one in the Echelon was weak, neither in terms of cultivation base nor intelligence!

"That's because you intentionally lured other Echelon cultivators here, right?" Meng Hao said coolly. "With the Eighth Nation's World Seal here as bait, plus the Ninth Nation's seal, the other Echelon members will be trying to kill me, giving you a chance to slip away."

His tone was tranquil, and his words calm. Han Qinglei had previously been quite smug because of his scheme, but all of a sudden, he got a bad feeling. Meng Hao was definitely completely beyond what he had

expected.

“You....” He was just about to continue speaking when all of a sudden, the pressure weighing down on the Eighth Nation grew even more intense, seemingly doubling. That could only mean one thing; another Echelon cultivator had entered the Eighth Nation.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he viciously clenched his right hand. Han Qinglei’s clone instantly exploded into pieces, completely destroyed!

The pursuit and dispatching of Han Qinglei’s clone had gone quickly and cleanly. Meng Hao waved his right hand, ignoring anything that might be happening up in the sky behind him, and instead headed toward the statue, reaching out toward the flame of the World Seal in the statue’s hand to grab it!

In that instant, a deep voice echoed out like thunder, filled with killing intent and somber dignity.

“That’s not for you to take! Touch it, and I’ll wipe out your entire clan!”

In conjunction with the voice, everything shook, and a huge wind rose up. The clouds parted to reveal a war chariot emanating a black light like a will of extermination. It radiated a domineering air and an intense pressure as it rumbled down from above.

The sinister chariot was being pulled by 1,000,000 souls, all of which were screaming fiercely, shaking the entire battlefield. As the chariot neared, darkness spread out like that of night, covering everything.

Standing in the chariot was a white-robed young man with long black hair and handsome features. He seemed threatening, although not angry, and he almost looked as if he had just emerged from the Yellow Springs, an emperor of death directing 1,000,000 dead souls into battle.

Each word he uttered boomed like thunder, crashing into Meng Hao’s ears. The mere voice itself caused the Eighth Nation’s National Aura Mountain to shake; cracks spread out, and the mountain seemed to be on the verge of collapsing.

Meng Hao started laughing as he looked up at the war chariot. Then his smile turned cold, and he said, “Wipe out my entire clan? You don’t qualify!”

Even as he spoke, his hand reached the World Seal... and grabbed it!

Chapter 1103: The Most Powerful Path of Immortality!

“How dare you!” The clouds above the Eighth Nation churned. The war chariot ripped through the air, pulled by 1,000,000 souls, causing the darkness of night to spread out rapidly. Standing in the chariot was Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain. He looked like an emperor of death, wielding the power of the Yellow Springs, his voice echoing out like claps of thunder.

Meng Hao’s face was calm, but inwardly, he was musing about how his previous assumption that he was at the absolute peak of the Immortal Realm had been proved wrong during his battle with Han Qinglei. Each and every person who joined the Echelon possessed different destinies and types of good fortune. They were all people who other cultivators simply couldn’t compare to. You could say that each Echelon cultivator had their own unique path, and therefore... each member was different.

The paths were different, and thus, the Echelon cultivators were all different!

Han Qinglei’s path had been somewhat discordant. He had his white bones and his azure lightning, but none of those things truly belonged to him alone. Therefore, despite the fact that he walked onto the path of the Echelon, when facing off with Meng Hao, it would be difficult to do anything except lose. Lose over and over again.

That was because Meng Hao had his own path to Immortality. That was the ancient way, the legendary and most powerful path, that of the Allheaven.

Now, he could see that this Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain obviously had his own path too.

He wasn’t sure exactly what path that was, and actually, he didn’t even feel the need to know!

The path of the Allheaven Immortal was something that had already

been legendary in the time of the primordial Paragon Immortal Realm. However, because many years had passed, it would have been virtually impossible for other paths to Immortality not to spring up in the other Mountains and Seas, paths which people would tread in the hopes of gaining greater power.

“Perhaps it has something to do with Paragon magic,” he thought. “After all, you have to gain enlightenment of Paragon magic in order to get into the Echelon. Perhaps... there is some additional reason for the existence of the Echelon besides accomplishing Paragon Sea Dream’s plan. Maybe it’s also to see which path... leads to becoming the most powerful Paragon in the Heavens!” Meng Hao wasn’t absolutely sure about this assessment. However, he was still about sixty to seventy percent sure that this was what was going on.

“Although, whatever other paths the Echelon cultivators tread, they will find that they are all dead ends when compared to mine. Even if they persist in walking further along those paths, they will find that the Allheaven Immortal... is the most powerful type of Immortal!

“I’m going to defeat all of them one by one, and then they’ll understand the truth!” His eyes began to glitter with a brilliant light of confidence.

That confidence... was self-confidence. He was sure that he would travel the farthest, and that being an Allheaven Immortal... was the most powerful path of Immortality!

After these thoughts flashed through his mind, he decided to spend no more time thinking. He turned his gaze away from the Fourth Mountain’s Echelon cultivator and his 1,000,000 souls, and instead retrieved the fire that represented the World Seal.

In the instant that he acquired the flame, an enraged roar could be heard echoing down from the sky. At the same time... a beam of light shot up from the area of the central temple.

The intense light caused everything to shake. It was far more intense than the light which had appeared when Meng Hao or when Han Qinglei had broken the previous records to successfully understand 100 Essences.

It was fully 3,000 meters wide as it shot through the Heavens. From a distance, it looked like a massive column connecting Heaven and Earth. Everyone in the entire Windswept Realm was able to see it, regardless of where they were!

The lands quaked, and the Heavens rumbled. The intense energy rippling out was unprecedented, vastly more powerful than on the previous two occasions. It was even possible to say that it was completely beyond compare.

The two before were like slivers of bamboo, whereas this one was as thick as an arm. Shocking peals of thunder rang out, causing all cultivators in the Windswept Realm to be thoroughly shaken.

The intense sound and shaking caused everyone near the central temple to look on with astonished expressions. They could do nothing but stare as the huge pillar of light shot up into the heavens and then transformed into a massive vortex.

Meng Hao stood next to the statue, holding the Eighth Nation's World Seal in his hand, and looked up at the vortex, a slight, cold smile touching his face.

"So, it's just as I suspected," he thought. "The first person to snatch a World Seal will break the previous record and provoke a blessing!"

That was one reason why Meng Hao was so confident, and also why he had been so calm. He didn't care who Han Qinglei got to come here, nor what other schemes he had in place. He was sure that if the first person to be enlightened regarding the National Aura received a blessing, and the first person to be enlightened regarding 100 Essences also got a blessing, then surely, the first person to win a World Seal would also receive a blessing, and a more powerful one at that.

Although it might seem like all these things happened over a long period of time, in fact, they happened almost instantly. Echelon cultivator Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain flew through the air, causing everyone in the nation to involuntarily look up in shock.

In the sky above the central temple, the vortex rapidly grew larger. In the

space of a few breaths of time, it covered the whole sky like a sheet, allowing everyone suddenly gain a glimpse of another world.

It was the same world which had appeared before, a world of mountains and statues. If you looked closely at those statues and mountains, you would see that they were split almost evenly.

Furthermore, within that world were four statues and five mountains that stuck out among all the others. Those statues were the largest statues in the world, as if all the other statues were children in comparison.

The five mountains were similarly taller than all of the other mountains, as if no one had ever been able to subjugate them and turn them into statues. The four statues and five mountains were filled with indescribable ripples of force which, if they spread out into the world, would shake everything.

Numerous mountains and statues floated about, but the four statues and five mountains stuck out the most. They were like the nucleus of the entire world. As of this moment, the first statue began to emanate rumbling sounds, and then suddenly collapsed into pieces, which crumbled down and then reformed into a new statue.

That statue... depicted Meng Hao!

Instantly, Meng Hao's appearance was revealed to everyone in the Windswept Realm. They could also see that this statue looked completely different than the first statue that had appeared when he had broken the record and reached the peak of the world!

He was the focus of all attention, causing everyone to tremble with shock!

An ancient voice suddenly rang out: "Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation has broken the previous record. He defeated Han Qinglei of the Eighth Nation, and wrested away the Eighth Nation's World Seal. He is the first person to win a World Seal, and will be rewarded with twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!"

The voice echoed throughout the entire Windswept Realm, to be heard

by everyone. People gasped, and looks of astonishment appeared. This reward was even more amazing than in the previous two. This time, it was twenty percent of the qi of the entire Windswept Realm!

It was difficult to even contemplate what it meant for a single person to acquire twenty percent of the qi flow of the entire world. It was as if Meng Hao were being favored by the entire Windswept Realm.

All of a sudden, Meng Hao was surrounded by an invisible tempest, a tempest that no one could see, and only he could sense.

His mind trembled as he heard what sounded like countless voices, voices which were apparently the prayers and entreaties of countless living beings from the Windswept Realm, over the course of innumerable years.

Furthermore, Meng Hao felt the Windswept Realm's power of rejection vanish. No longer was it trying to expel him. Instead, it approved of him, as if he were now mysteriously connected to the Realm.

That connection caused Meng Hao to begin to pant. He could only imagine how much easier that connection would make it for him to understand the Essences. However, that was secondary. At the moment, he could now sense something like the will of the Windswept Realm.

What caused him to pant even more than anything else was that the will of the Windswept Realm now viewed him with kindness, and wished to protect him!!

Twenty percent of the qi flow... indicated that any opponent who faced him directly could be struck dead by lightning!

Furthermore, if that qi flow ever reached one hundred percent....

Then, even if Meng Hao were a mortal who could wield no magic whatsoever, he would still be like an Imperial Lord within the Windswept Realm.

He closed his eyes and focused fully on connecting with the will of the Windswept Realm within the tempest.

Meanwhile, in the First Nation, the most powerful Echelon cultivator sat there cross-legged. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and they were filled with unprecedented focus.

“Qi flow,” he murmured. “So, this reward is qi flow too. That’s completely different than in times past!!” The cultivators sitting around him all looked very serious.

A similar scene played out in the Second Nation!

However, on the Third Nation’s National Aura Mountain was a cultivator who was not from the Third Mountain, but had an Echelon mark on his forehead nonetheless. He was a middle-aged man, and currently, he was frowning.

“I WILL lead the Windswept Realm back to prominence!” he murmured coldly, his eyes flickering with killing intent. “As the former sole Imperial Lord of the Windswept Realm, what reason do you have to resist me!?”

The Third Nation was special, but as for the Fifth Nation, the Sixth Nation, and the Seventh Nation....

All members of the Echelon, and all other cultivators, were shaken by the reward being given to Meng Hao. At the same time, Meng Hao’s name was deeply imprinted onto their hearts.

In the Sixth Nation was a young woman, currently involved in a deadly chase. Her face was pale, and she was now being pursued by even more people than before.

“Three records broken, and two of them were him!” she thought.

As she sped through the air, she looked up at the statue of Meng Hao in the sky, and a gleam of anticipation appeared in her eyes.

“Soon.... I have the feeling that we’ll be meeting soon,” she murmured. “Meng Hao... could you be the person I’ve been waiting for? If you are... then I’ll help you become the most powerful cultivator in the Echelon. That’s my mission....

“If it’s not you, well then I’ll just have to go with the Echelon cultivator

from the First Mountain.”

This woman was none other than Xue'er, the successor of Immortal Ancient.

As these world-shaking events occurred, in a city of mortals in the Eighth Nation, a young student sat in a house reading a bamboo scroll. Actually, he only appeared to be reading, and was in fact trembling slightly.

He could sense all of the things happening in the world outside. You could even say that those things were happening because of him!

After a long moment, he put the bamboo scroll down and looked out of the window up into the sky. His face darkened, and after a moment of hesitation, he sighed.

“Meng Hao.... So that's why you were so calm. You were banking on the reward from the Windswept Realm!

“Perhaps everything that happened in the battle went according to your plans. Meng Hao... the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Mountain. I'm going to remember you!” That seemingly mortal young student was... Han Qinglei!

Chapter 1104: Killing You... Will Only Take Seven Steps!

Han Qinglei stood there silently, sighing inwardly. Once again, the desire to fight burned in his eyes.

He kept telling himself that he was in the Echelon, a Chosen among blazing suns. He could accept being defeated in battle, but he couldn't accept being humiliated!

From the moment he had entered the Eighth Nation, he had parted ways with his clone, using it to distract Meng Hao so that his true form would be able to evade detection. Then he had used a secret magic to stifle his aura and escape to this place.

Without the clone to distract Meng Hao, his secret magic alone would not have been enough to escape undetected. One of the unique aspects of this technique was that the longer he used it, the more difficult it would be to see through it.

What he had needed was time, which was why he had sent his clone to take his place.

"Lin Cong is the second most powerful among the Echelon, and I'm no match for him. Meng Hao might have been able to beat me, but to defeat Lin Cong... will be extremely difficult!

"Seven current members of the Echelon stepped into the Ancient Realm in the past, but after realizing that their paths were incorrect, they intentionally lowered their cultivation bases with the purpose of breaking through again later. Each successive time they break through, they become more powerful!

"Lin Cong is so strong that it's impossible to determine how many times he's broken through into the Ancient Realm, only to drop back down....

"Those things don't have much to do with me, though. Since I can't keep hold of the Eighth Nation's seal, it would be better to curry favor by handing it over someone else, than to give it to Meng Hao. This also

means I won't be hunted down, so one of these days, I'll have a chance to make my comeback!" Han Qinglei's eyes glittered, and he took a deep breath. Finally, he bowed his head and continued to hide his presence. He wanted to use another secret magic to observe the battle between Meng Hao and Lin Cong, but after some consideration, decided against it.

He felt sure that Meng Hao was no match for Lin Cong, and yet, wasn't completely certain. Meng Hao's calm face hovered there in his mind's eye, and after a moment of thought, he made up his mind.

Although he chose not to observe the battle, the Echelon cultivators in the other nations all used various secret magics, and utilized significant resources, to be able to observe the battle.

This fight was not just a chance to see how strong Lin Cong was, it was also an opportunity to see Meng Hao's battle prowess, which would help them be prepared for future encounters.

Glowing screens appeared in front of each of the various members of the Echelon. Those screens all depicted the National Aura Mountain in the Eighth Nation!

Currently, Lin Cong bore down on the mountain in shocking fashion, causing everything to shake. As he neared, his rage erupted.

"Dammit! All of that... should be mine!!

"You're stealing the qi flow of the Windswept Realm that belongs to me. Well then... I guess I'll just have to kill you!!" Lin Cong's voice echoed out, and his war chariot rumbled as he bore down on Meng Hao. He extended his hand and waved a finger at Meng Hao.

Immediately, the 1,000,000 souls leading the chariot issued intense screams, then spread out like a sea of dead souls, covering everything. They transformed into a gigantic hand, which then smashed down viciously toward Meng Hao as he stood there on the mountain peak.

Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes snapped open. The invisible wind which surrounded him split apart, and despite the fact that Meng Hao clearly didn't make a single move, dozens of lightning bolts suddenly

appeared in midair. They stabbed down, smashing into the ground in front of Meng Hao, blocking the enormous, pitch-black hand of dead souls.

This... was one of the benefits Meng Hao received after acquiring twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!

Protection provided by Heaven and Earth!

Booms echoed out as the lightning slammed into the 1,000,000 dead souls. They screamed as the enormous hand collapsed into pieces in front of Meng Hao, incapable of even touching him.

Almost in the exact moment that the 1,000,000 souls fell apart, Meng Hao's energy spiked through the roof!

"Killing you... will only take seven steps!" he said.

In accompaniment with his domineering words, his cultivation base rocketed higher and higher, and a domineering aura spread out in all directions. He did not retreat. He did not dance about with fancy fighting moves. He just went in for the kill!

However, when his words entered the ears of the other Echelon cultivators in the other nations, they were met with cold laughter.

"This Meng Hao is way too arrogant and conceited. He thinks he can kill Lin Cong with only seven steps? Not even the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain could do that! What makes Meng Hao think he can!?"

"Lin Cong is powerful. He might be quite a bit beneath the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, but it's real grandstanding for Meng Hao to claim that he can kill him with seven steps!"

In the First Nation, the most powerful Echelon cultivator, the white robed young man from the First Mountain, coolly said, "It's good to be confident, but reality won't match up."

Of course, Meng Hao couldn't hear the words being spoken. However, even if he could, he wouldn't pay them the slightest heed. His path was that of the legendary Allheaven Immortal, and in his heart, he knew that to be the most powerful path. To tread such a path required unflinching

determination. Furthermore... he would crush anything that stood in his path, walk to the peak, and smash all the other Echelon cultivators. He would use his actions... to show that he was the most powerful in the Echelon!

BOOM!

Meng Hao stepped forward to begin the Seven God Steps.

Lin Cong in his war chariot threw his head back and laughed. It was an icy laughter, filled with both killing intent and fury.

Never had anyone in his generation dared to say anything like that to him before. Only seven steps... were needed to kill him? The domineering air of those words prompted Lin Cong to laugh maniacally.

“Not even the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain would be confident enough to say something like that to me. Meng Hao, you’re the first!” By the time Lin Cong’s words finished echoing out, Meng Hao had taken his first step!

That step took him from the peak of the mountain to a position in midair. He was now in front of the chariot, causing the scattered remnants of the dead souls to tremble and flee in all directions. They were screaming, as if there were some powerful energy exploding off of Meng Hao, something that, if it struck them, would exterminate them for all eternity!

As the dead souls screamed, Meng Hao unleashed a punch.

The Life-Extermination Fist!

That fist slammed into the war chariot, unleashing a massive force onto Lin Cong. Lin Cong was just about to use some divine abilities and magical techniques, but the force interrupted him. His face fell when he heard a muffled boom coming from his war chariot, which was then shoved backward by 300 meters!

Boundlessly domineering!

In the same moment that the war chariot was thrown back, Meng Hao

took a second step. His energy once again erupted, making him multiple times more powerful than before.

Heaven and Earth shook as the step landed him in front of the war chariot once again, whereupon he unleashed yet another punch!

Yet again, the Life-Extermination Fist! As boundlessly domineering as before!

Booms rang out as the war chariot, with Lin Cong inside of it, was shaken violently. Yet again, his magical techniques were interrupted. From the very beginning until now, he hadn't even had a chance to fight back!

"He's not just getting in lucky shots!" he thought, inwardly shaken.

You couldn't blame him, really. Anyone who ended up fighting Meng Hao would encounter the same domineering battle tactics. He destroyed opportunities to attack, and would always aim to seize the initiative, and the first blow!

Everyone back in the Ninth Mountain and Sea had experienced that, and now, it was time for other cultivators to learn exactly how domineering Meng Hao was!

Three steps, three punches! Booms echoed out continuously as the chariot was again shoved backward!

Four steps, four punches! Massive rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao dazzlingly set out to prove that he could back up the domineering nature of his words and kill Lin Cong with only seven steps!

If he could, then his self-confidence would grow even greater, his momentum even stronger. His name would rocket to the very top of the Echelon!

Even if Lin Cong didn't die in the end, in the future, his mental state would collapse whenever he saw Meng Hao.

Lin Cong was flabbergasted at how he was being completely subjugated!!

"This is impossible! No one in my generation has ever completely suppressed me during a fight!!"

Booms shook the sky as Meng Hao attacked with frantic madness. Four steps. Four punches!

Each one of those punches was the Life-Extermination Fist, which continuously interrupted Lin Cong's magical techniques, making it very difficult for him to unleash any magic at all. The fourth punch caused cracks to spread out over his war chariot, which then exploded into pieces.

Lin Cong let out a bellow of rage and waved his hand, using the opportunity to try to release a divine ability. The will of death swirled around him, as if the Yellow Springs themselves were rising up from the underworld.

He had to go all-out with everything to fight back. He couldn't allow Meng Hao to build up any more momentum, or for himself to be any further suppressed. He was suddenly shocked to realize that if things kept going the way they were, then it wasn't necessarily impossible... for Meng Hao to actually kill him with seven steps!!

However... just when he was on the verge of unleashing his divine ability, Meng Hao took a fifth step. His energy shot up explosively, far past anything from before. The Heavens flickered, and a huge wind screamed up, making the qi flow of the Windswept Realm even more evident.

When he took that fifth step, he appeared directly in front of Lin Cong, whereupon he... unleashed yet another punch!

This was a different strike, not the Life-Extermination Fist, but rather, the blow of Self-Immolation, the Bedevilment Fist!

It was an insanity the likes of which could sacrifice anything, even one's own life, to enter a state of mad Bedevilment, which was then materialized into a punch. As of this moment, only one thought existed inside of Meng Hao's head.

Because he was Bedeviled, that fist possessed both form and will!

Lin Cong's eyes went wide, and his heart filled with astonishment. He was aware before that Meng Hao was not weak; after all, he had defeated Han Qinglei. However, he had never imagined that Meng Hao would be

this powerful!

From his view, Meng Hao's power didn't come from his cultivation base, but rather his style of fighting. It was a style that used a completely domineering momentum, it left the opponent incapable of even breathing, all the way until they were destroyed.

Meng Hao's way of fighting was something completely unique, something he had never before encountered.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

One shocking punch destroyed Lin Cong's divine ability as if it were a rotten log. The mad, Bedeviled fist exploded on toward Lin Cong, bursting with power.

Blood oozed out of Lin Cong's mouth as he was shoved backward. He let out a miserable shriek, feeling completely and utterly humiliated as Meng Hao took a sixth step!

When that step landed, the world crackled with thunder. Countless lightning bolts exploded up around him as his energy flew even higher. Even the mountain down below was shaking violently; cracks appeared as if it would fall apart at any moment.

Chapter 1105: What Did You Just Say?!

The shattering of the sky grew even more apparent. Cracks rapidly formed and closed up, leaving behind what looked like scars. There didn't seem to be anything out of the ordinary about Meng Hao, and yet, he had suddenly become a larger-than-life figure, like a giant who stood on equal footing with the Heavens.

A terrifying aura rose up from him as he took his sixth step, and unleashed the sixth punch!

It was the Bedevilment Fist yet again, the strike of Self-Immolation. However, this strike was delivered even more directly than before, and the domineering power of Meng Hao's energy seemed to fuse with Heaven and Earth.

When the strike landed, Lin Cong let out a miserable scream. He bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood, which transformed into majestic Yellow Springs that swept out in all directions.

Massive booms could be heard as the Yellow Springs were destroyed. Meng Hao was slightly injured, and yet, the killing intent in his eyes had not lessened.

"Last step!" he said, taking the seventh step in unison with the destruction of the Yellow Springs.

It was as if the entire world ground to a halt, and was replaced by Meng Hao. With the assistance of twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, Meng Hao could fuse with the lands, as if... he were the embodiment of the will of Heaven!

The entire world began to burst; Meng Hao was like a divine spirit that represented the will of Heaven, becoming its embodiment as he fused with Heaven and Earth!

His foot landed, and it was as if the Heavens were crushing the lands beneath. His fist was like Heaven and Earth, destroying all living things. It was as if Meng Hao were the most respected entity in all creation.

That was because this was...

The God-Slaying Fist!

When the God-Slaying Fist was unleashed, the Echelon cultivators in the other nations watching the battle let out successive gasps. They had watched Meng Hao's terrifying momentum grow with each step, had seen the wild and Devilish energy building up, had witnessed his intensely domineering style. It instantly left a deep impression on everyone, and caused them to tremble in astonishment.

The Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, the white-robed youth, felt his eyes going wide as an expression of shock filled his face. Meng Hao's way of fighting left even him astonished. Meng Hao seized the initiative and pressed forward, crushing everything in front of him like dead weeds.

All of the Echelon cultivators were completely astonished by this fist strike.

"What fist strike is that?!"

"It might not be impossible... for him to actually kill Lin Cong with only seven steps!!"

"This Meng Hao is actually incredibly strong! Han Qinglei couldn't match up to him, and it looks like Lin Cong is also going to be defeated.... He might be qualified to fight for the spot of the number one most powerful cultivator in the Echelon!!"

At this point, Lin Cong performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then shoved his hands out in front of him.

"Holy Requiem Skull!!" he roared. Shockingly, a Paragon magic appeared, an enormous, golden skull!

The surface of the skull was covered with innumerable magical symbols, tightly packed in a way that seemed to encompass a will of death that mourned for all living things.

The Holy Requiem Skull was Lin Cong's Paragon magic. By gaining

enlightenment of this skull, he was able to craft a Paragon magic, and thus enter Paragon Sea Dream's Echelon!

Becoming part of the Echelon completely changed his destiny, allowing him to rise to prominence in the Fourth Mountain. With the secret support of Ksitigarbha, he had survived numerous deadly trials, and had defended his place in the Echelon.

All of those numerous battles gave him complete and utter control over his Paragon magic, a power which enabled him to peer ahead into the future of the battle!

He was able to find the weaknesses in all other Daoist magics, he was also able to predict what actions his opponents would take. He would then use all of that information to his advantage. Even more shocking to his opponents was that he could see visions of their future.

Because of that, and thanks to the tips and pointers given him by Ksitigarbha, the path of Immortality that he treaded was essentially the same as that of Ksitigarbha! It was a unique path of Immortality that was like striding out from death into a new life!

However, his Paragon magic required a significant expenditure of mental energy, and therefore, he rarely used it. However, having been forced into a corner by Meng Hao's domineering style, he was left with no choice but to utilize this most powerful Paragon magic.

However, as soon as he unleashed his Holy Requiem Skull Paragon magic, Lin Cong's face completely fell. The only thing he saw in his vision was that there was no way for him to escape from the power of Meng Hao's fist strike.

There were no gaps!

There was no way to escape!

He was even able to determine that after Meng Hao's strike landed, he didn't plan to follow up with any divine abilities or magical techniques. It was as if... Meng Hao was completely and utterly confident that this fist and this step would utterly eradicate Lin Cong!

“How could this be!?” he thought, shaking mentally. He tried to back up, but Meng Hao’s killing intent exploded out, as if the God-Slaying Fist were capable of eradicating all living things in Heaven and Earth!

It would land on Lin Cong, and there was nothing he could do about it!

Tears of blood seeped out of Lin Cong’s eyes. After madly depleting his mental energy to use his Paragon magic at this critical juncture, he was able to glimpse a bit of the future.

The only result of that flashing vision was that Lin Cong’s face fell.

He had no time to think. Eyes bloodshot, he viciously sent the gold-colored Holy Requiem Skull rumbling forward to try to block Meng Hao’s incoming fist strike.

Meng Hao hadn’t lost even a bit of momentum. He was backed by the will of Heaven and Earth, so no matter what tried to block his path, it would be brushed aside with ease. There was nothing that could stand in the way of his surging energy.

That was because Meng Hao’s God-Slaying Fist was backed by the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, utilizing the will of Heaven to take it to the absolute peak!

Anything and everything would be reduced to rubble in the face of this fist!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Meng Hao’s God-Slaying Fist slammed into the golden skull, causing massive rumbling to echo out. The skull trembled and then exploded into pieces, allowing Meng Hao’s fist to slam into Lin Cong’s chest.

Cracking sounds could be heard, and Lin Cong let out a bloodcurdling scream. His body hurled backward like a kite with its string cut. All the bones in his body shattered, and in the blink of an eye, he exploded. His chest erupted in a fountain of blood, which spread out in all directions until his entire body was destroyed, with the exception of his head!

By now, all spectators in the Windswept Realm were completely and

utterly shocked, filled with pounding waves of astonishment. To witness something happening that moments ago had seemed impossible, led to unparalleled stupefaction.

In the First Nation, the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, the white-robed young man, had been sitting there cross-legged moments ago. Now, he was standing, staring at the screen along with all of his followers, whose faces were covered with complete disbelief.

They all knew Lin Cong, and because of that, the scene which was playing out in front of them was completely astounding.

“He... he actually did it!!” the followers gasped.

The Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain looked at the screen and then suddenly smiled, although it was a smile of complete coldness. His eyes flickered with a bright light as he said, “This guy does qualify to fight me.”

In the Second Nation, on the National Aura Mountain, everything was freezing cold. Countless snowflakes swirled around a man who sat there on the mountain peak. He wore a blue robe, and he was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain. His features were cold, but his eyes narrowed as he watched the ice screen in front of him, and the image of Meng Hao upon it.

He seemed calm on the outside, but inwardly, he was rocked by waves of shock.

In the Third Nation, a strange scene was playing out. One hundred cultivators sat cross-legged on the National Aura Mountain. At their head was a middle-aged man wearing an Imperial robe. His face was extremely dark and sinister.

“Is this Meng Hao a variable thrown in by the Windswept Imperial Lord...?”

The pudgy Echelon cultivator in the Fifth Nation, the young boy in the Sixth Nation, and the murderous youth in the Seventh Nation, all watched with flickering faces and trembling hearts.

Earlier, they didn't think that Meng Hao could kill Lin Cong with a handful of steps, but now they had personally witnessed the battle, and seen Meng Hao's power and domineering style. It instantly turned into a massive pressure weighing down on them.

Now, not a one of them dared to underestimate Meng Hao. Although they coveted his two World Seals, as of now, they were forced to weigh the risks associated with trying to take them.

You could say that Meng Hao's battle just now had completely cowed the Echelon cultivators in the Windswept Realm.

At the same time that all the Echelon cultivators were shaken by Meng Hao, Lin Cong's body exploded in the air above the Eighth Nation. Just when his head seemed on the verge of exploding, killing him in body and spirit, golden light suddenly began to shine up from the shattered golden skull. It transformed into a golden vortex which surrounded Lin Cong's head, as if to teleport him away.

There was still a bit of life force left in Lin Cong's head, thanks to his special way of practicing cultivation. As long as he still had his head, he could recover, although it came with a heavy price, including a drop in cultivation base.

In the moment that he was about to teleport away, Meng Hao's energy suddenly rose up even higher than before, and he said, "Think you can just leave? Exterminate!"

The words were spoken softly, but in that moment, an enormous, shocking foot appeared!

The foot seemed to obfuscate the entire sky, and when it appeared, it began to crush down onto Lin Cong, shattering natural law, destroying Essence!

This was the ultimate power of the Seven God Steps!

The previous seven steps were just a buildup of momentum and energy, leading up to this explosive, exterminating attack.

An intense sensation of deadly crisis filled Lin Cong. He had experienced

such feelings before in his life, but this was the most intense it had ever been. Even his battle with the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain hadn't been so terrifying and shocking.

There was no possible way he could have ever imagined that Meng Hao... would be so powerful!!

When he saw the foot descending, he realized he didn't have time to complete the teleportation. He knew that he was about to die, so he let out a powerful howl that echoed out in all directions.

"Meng Hao, if I die, Xu Qing dies too!" Those words entered Meng Hao's ears like the crash of zillions of thunderclaps. His entire body began to shake. ¹

"What did you just say!?" His heart began to pound in a way it rarely did, even causing his divine ability to become unstable. The enormous foot in the sky trembled, and because of his mental instability, his momentum faltered, and his energy began to wane.

Upon leaving Planet South Heaven, he had asked his father about Xu Qing. Fang Xiufeng had told him that he left some divine will on Xu Qing to protect her during reincarnation. Finding out her final destination when she was actually reincarnated was a matter of fortune and timing, but Fang Xiufeng had assured him that he didn't need to worry.

Even still, and even after so many years had passed, Meng Hao still worried about it occasionally. His original plan had been to wait until he left the Nine Seas God World, and then go back to Planet South Heaven to find out more about the situation. After all, she was his wife, his beloved partner. Although he didn't often think about the matter, to hear Lin Cong say what he just did filled Meng Hao's mind with crashing waves of shock.

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1. Lin Cong talked to Xu Qing in chapter 1058.

Chapter 1106: Slaughtering Into the Fourth Nation!

In the moment that the instability of Meng Hao's divine ability caused the enormous foot to grind to a momentary halt, Lin Cong's head finally got its opportunity to flee. The golden vortex covered his head, then began to spin rapidly. Finally, Lin Cong's head vanished.

The vortex then transformed into countless motes of golden dust, which then vanished as well.

Meng Hao's face darkened as he looked at the spot where Lin Cong had vanished. His mind was still being battered by waves of astonishment. Xu Qing's place in his heart was something that he didn't allow anyone to touch; it was his weak spot.

Xu Qing was his wife, to whom he had sworn his vows in front of Heaven and Earth. He had watched her beauty fade as he held her in his arms, looked on as her soul entered the Underworld River. They had agreed...

To meet again after she was reincarnated.

Meng Hao could never have predicted that he would hear Xu Qing's name come out of Lin Cong's mouth in this place. It was something that caused his eyes to glow with infinite coldness.

This was his first time encountering Lin Cong, and he knew that it was also the first time Lin Cong had ever seen him. Therefore... for him to say Xu Qing's name indicated that Lin Cong... had seen her in her reincarnated form!

Then he thought about where Lin Cong came from, and a tremor ran through him. "That means there's an eighty percent likelihood that Xu Qing is on the Fourth Mountain!

"But how could Lin Cong possibly know about the relationship between me and Xu Qing?" Then he thought about Lin Cong's Paragon magic, and the familiar aura he had sensed, and he understood everything. What Lin

Cong had seen was not something that he could use to defend against the God-Slaying Fist. Instead, he saw the connection between Meng Hao and Xu Qing!

A moment later, Meng Hao's eyes began to flicker with killing intent as he recalled Lin Cong's words.

If I die, Xu Qing dies too!

"Lin Cong, you're courting death!" he said, looking up. Then he took a step forward. He did not return to the Ninth Nation, but instead, didn't hesitate for a moment as he headed toward the Fourth Nation.

As of this moment, World Seals weren't important, and Mount Whiteseal wasn't important. The only important thing... were clues about Xu Qing, and... what Lin Cong had just said!

Without clarifying these matters, how could he possibly return to the Ninth Nation? Even if he did, his heart would be in chaos, and he wouldn't be able to remain calm.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao slashed through the air in a beam of light, flying like a bolt of lightning. Dust kicked up as he sped faster and faster, his killing intent rising.

Soon, he was nearing the border of the Eighth Nation. He would not enter the Seventh Nation; but rather, head through the region of the central temple. After all, that was the fastest way to reach the Fourth Nation.

He had no way to know whether or not Lin Cong took this route, but there was no time to pause and consider the matter. He sped along, soon leaving the Eighth Nation and entering the region of the central temple.

When he looked down, he saw the fierce, bloody fighting, and the countless soldiers engaged in battle. The entire land was stained red with blood.

He merely glanced at it as he sped by, piercing through the air with shocking momentum. The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm saw him, and were instantly shocked.

“That’s Meng Hao!”

“That’s the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Nation, Meng Hao!”

“Why is he here?”

Although none of these people had witnessed his battle with Lin Cong like the Echelon cultivators had, they knew that he had broken two of the previous three records. It was something that filled most of them with incredible awe and fear.

There were some fools among them whose greed and avarice was awakened as soon as they laid eyes on Meng Hao. From what they understood, if you could kill someone in the Echelon, then you could get their Echelon mark.

Not too long after Meng Hao entered the central temple region, a stream of sword light suddenly sped through the air toward him. The sword qi was shocking, filled with a murderous air, and was apparently imbued with natural law as it stabbed toward Meng Hao’s neck.

“You just showed up, why are you running away?!” someone said coldly. The attack was made by a middle-aged cultivator, but he wasn’t the only aggressor. Two other cultivators shot toward Meng Hao from off to the side.

In other circumstances, Meng Hao might be filled with a desire to hunt them down and kill them, or might just ignore them. But in his anxiety-filled state, there was only one fate in store for anyone who got in his way.

Instant death!

His eyes were bright red as he extended his hand, grabbing the incoming flying sword, then sending it speeding back in the direction it had come from.

The speed with which it moved now vastly exceeded its previous speed. Intense, incomparable energy propelled the sword forward. The sword itself could not withstand the force propelling it, and began to collapse, starting from the tip. Before it could even collapse by half, though, it stabbed so hard into the forehead of the cultivator who had thrown it that

even the hilt blasted through him.

The speed was so indescribable that, despite the extraordinary cultivation base of the middle-aged cultivator, he didn't even qualify to try to dodge it. He was dead instantly.

This scene caused the other two cultivators to gasp and fall back. Other restless cultivators off in the distance looked on with shock, and didn't dare to attempt to get in Meng Hao's way.

Since no one dared to block him, Meng Hao shot through the central temple region, quickly reaching the area where it bordered the Fourth Nation.

Many of the cultivators behind him looked on with shocked faces.

"He actually went through the entire central temple region?"

"How is that possible? The pressure there is incredible! Misfortune will befall anyone who enters there. Not even other Echelon cultivators would dare to go in there, and yet... he did!?"

"Could it be... because of the twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm?" Everyone was shocked as Meng Hao sped off.

Meanwhile, Lin Cong's head appeared on the National Aura Mountain of the Fourth Nation. The head promptly withered, causing Lin Cong to let out a howl. Blue veins popped out, and then veins and arteries began to snake down out of his neck. They grew longer and longer, quickly forming the outline of a body. His face was now pale white, but he bit his tongue again and then roared. Next, bones began to form inside of that body.

A recovery like this was one of indescribable pain, and an incredible price had to be paid...one that he could barely manage. Furthermore, he would experience a cultivation base loss that would be impossible to recover from easily.

However, all of that was better than dying.

"Meng Hao, I'm not going to let you get away with this!" he growled, his expression vicious. As his body reformed, he threw his head back and

howled. Venomous rage appeared in his eyes. Just as Meng Hao had suspected, his Holy Requiem Skull had given him a glimpse, not of a way to survive the fist strike, but rather, another vision.

He had seen the Fourth Mountain, and Meng Hao, surrounded by a sea of blood and mountains of corpses. It was as if Meng Hao had traveled there amidst endless slaughter.

In the vision, he saw Xu Qing. She and Meng Hao were looking at each other, their gazes soft.

The vision not only caused him to feel jealous, it gave him the opportunity he needed.

“Faster, must go faster!

“I don’t know exactly what type of relationship Xu Qing and Meng Hao have, but seeing how nervous he got, she’s obviously his weak spot. As soon as I said her name, he just about went crazy. He’s definitely on his way here to kill me!

“I have to recover so that I can flee!” He gritted his teeth hard as his body restored itself. Time passed. More than an hour went by, during which time he continued to pay a heavy price for the recovery process.

When his body finally reappeared, he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. This body was incredibly weak; he now possessed only about sixty percent of his original cultivation base.

This was actually the weakest he had ever been since joining the Echelon. His face was ashen as he reached up and grabbed the World Seal from the statue. He then flew off of the National Aura Mountain, eyes glittering as he was surrounded by four figures, those followers of his whom he had brought with him to the Windswept Realm.

After a moment of hesitation, a look of determination could be seen in his eyes, and he said, “Activate the Stellar Alteration Grand Magic!”

His four followers didn’t respond. However, their appearances gradually began to change until they all looked like Lin Cong. Even their auras seemed the same. Then, they sped off in four different directions.

As for Lin Cong, he picked a different direction to flee in.

Almost in the same instant that Lin Cong's four followers sped off, incredible pressure suddenly weighed down on the Fourth Nation. The lands quaked and the air distorted; Lin Cong and his four followers all trembled.

"He's here! How could he be so fast!? This is impossible!!" Lin Cong said, his face falling. He instantly unleashed a secret magic, dispersing his aura and fleeing at top speed.

Meng Hao's killing intent raged as he entered the Fourth Nation. He immediately sent his divine sense out and, in the blink of an eye, sensed the five auras. He frowned, then sped toward the nearest one.

Booms echoed out through the Fourth Nation. It only took the space of ten breaths for him to reach the source of one of Lin Cong's auras, and what he found was a cultivator who looked exactly like Lin Cong.

As soon as the cultivator saw him, his face fell, and he backed up. Meng Hao waved a finger to employ the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, causing the man to lurch to a stop.

Next, his entire world was overturned by Meng Hao's palm, which latched onto the top of his head.

"Soulsearch!" Meng Hao's voice was as cold as the wind in the middle of winter. When it blew past the cultivator's ears, the man's head filled with indescribable pain. He began to tremble, and then screamed.

Chapter 1107: Goal: Number One in the Echelon!

The cultivator's face twisted, and screams of pain echoed out in all directions. Everyone who heard them was shocked to the core, and could scarcely even imagine how such pain could be possible. It was something almost beyond description. 1

At best, you could say it felt like a hand being shoved into your brain and rifling around violently. Blood sprayed from the cultivator's mouth, and he suddenly went as stiff as a board. He was dead.

Despite his death, his corpse still adhered to Meng Hao's hand, and did not fall to the ground.

After a few breaths of time, Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

"Lin Cong, huh...? So you turned your four followers into doppelgängers to try to pull a fast one on me!" He lowered his hand, and the cultivator's corpse dropped toward the ground. Before it could even land, Meng Hao had shot off into the distance.

He sent his divine sense out into a wide area, looking for Lin Cong's true form. However, Lin Cong's magical technique was strange, and Meng Hao could find no weaknesses in it. The remaining four figures sped rapidly off in different directions. Another strange thing was that their auras were all slowly fading. It wouldn't be too long before they would disappear from Meng Hao's divine sense altogether.

Lin Cong's original plan had been to ensure that there was no aura for Meng Hao to detect at all. If he did spend time searching, at most, he would find the four cultivators he had switched bodies with.

However, Lin Cong could never have predicted that Meng Hao would arrive in the Fourth Nation so quickly. Instead of crossing through the other nations, he had chosen to pass directly over the central temple.

That formed a kink in his plan!

However, everything could be resolved as long as enough time passed. Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph. He patted his bag of holding, and numerous blackpod imps flew out, which he sent screaming out in all directions. They were like black bolts of lighting, emanating murderous auras.

Under the control of Meng Hao's divine sense, they sped out in pursuit, whereas Meng Hao did nothing. He did no pursuing whatsoever. He simply hovered there in midair above the Fourth Nation, equidistant from all of the fleeing versions of Lin Cong.

His method for determining which one was Lin Cong was a simple one. He would just wait to see what happened when the blackpod imps tried to possess the four different figures. Success or failure didn't matter; either way he would get some clues.

Soon, he looked up.

"Gotcha!" he said, vanishing.

Meanwhile, near the border between the Fourth and Third Nations, Lin Cong had an extremely unsightly look on his face. He was surrounded by more than ten screaming blackpod imps, all of whom were trying to possess him.

"What are these things!?" Lin Cong had a powerful cultivation base, but right now, he was reduced to about sixty percent of his power. As for the blackpod imps, their possession technique was bizarre. If they failed, they would transform it into a piercing divine sense attack that Lin Cong was having a hard time dealing with. A sensation of deadly crisis welled up in him, and he began to tremble.

As the feeling of imminent death grew stronger, he began to shake even more violently.

"I'm NOT going to die here!!" Filled with regret, he sent a mighty wind blowing out to drive away the seemingly unkillable blackpod imps. Then he gritted his teeth and, despite his weakened form, once again unleashed his Paragon magic!

The golden Holy Requiem Skull materialized in front of him, not as a way to attack the blackpod imps, but as a means of trying to find a way out of his current situation!

Lin Cong's face went pale as he realized there was no such way out.

"Impossible! Heaven never cuts off all paths! There's always hope in every situation!" Eyes gleaming with a vicious look, he bit the tip of his tongue, causing his body to wither rapidly. His hair even turned white.

He went all out, sacrificing even his longevity in an attempt to get his Paragon magic to reveal a means of escape.

Rumbling could be heard, and Lin Cong's body continued to wither, when finally, he found what he was looking for in the Holy Requiem Skull. After he saw it, he gaped in shock, then, laughing maniacally, viciously smacked his own chest. A huge blob of blood spurted out, which then splashed down onto the ground.

His laughter grew more and more intense as he spun around, a look of determination on his face. He then pushed his finger down onto his forehead, sending a tremor through his body. His eyes suddenly went blurry, but rapidly grew clear again. He glanced at the Holy Requiem Skull and realized that he was now missing some of the memories he had had before. Expression serious, he headed off into the distance.

Before too long, he was once again surrounded by blackpod imps. At the same time, a long beam of light appeared in the air not too far off, radiating killing intent.

"Lin Cong!" roared Meng Hao, his voice rumbling like thunder filled with Heavenly might, causing Lin Cong to shake. His divine sense was blessed with twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, transforming his voice into thunder from Heaven, and surrounding his body with a lake of lightning.

Lin Cong was nearly deafened by Meng Hao's voice. His mind spun, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. After reforming his body, he had only possessed sixty percent of his original cultivation base, making it very difficult to use his Paragon magic. In fact, wasting his longevity and life

force the way he had just now caused his cultivation base to drop even further, until it was at only thirty percent of its original strength.

It didn't matter how strong he was before. With a cultivation base like that, he was like a candle flickering in the wind. Meng Hao's mere voice shook his heart and caused blood to spray out of his mouth. There was nothing he could possibly do to fight back.

All he could do was scream miserably, and look up with an unyielding expression.

He hated Han Qinglei, and hated the fact that he had greedily tried to snatch the Eighth Nation's World Seal. The end result had been complete ruin.

He also hated fate. The speed of Meng Hao's pursuit had ruined all of his preparations. All he had needed was another hour, and then he would have disappeared without a trace.

But now, everything had changed, and there was nothing he could do about it.

"The Heavens want to destroy me? Well, I'm not willing to die by your hand, Meng Hao!" Lin Cong began to laugh, a loud, shrill laughter.

"You want to know about Xu Qing, well... come on!" he screamed as he hovered there in midair. "Soulsearch me if you want, scrape the information out of my brain! I don't care!"

"I just want you give me an honorable death!" He was in the Echelon, and second in power only to the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain.

He was a blazing sun in the Fourth Mountain, and he was a proud person. Even if he died, he wanted to die with honor!

Meng Hao shot toward him like lightning. Without the slightest hesitation, he reached out and placed his hand onto the top of Lin Cong's head.

Meng Hao wouldn't believe anything that Lin Cong told him about Xu

Qing; he needed to see it for himself!

He unleashed his Soulsearh magic, pouring his divine sense into Lin Cong's brain. Images from Lin Cong's life passed through his mind until finally, he saw Xu Qing!

She actually looked exactly the same as she had before entering reincarnation. She wasn't the most beautiful woman in the world, but her face was etched eternally onto Meng Hao's heart.

Lin Cong trembled from the indescribable pain. He clenched his teeth tightly, and didn't groan or moan at all. His eyes began to fade, and his body was shaking. However, his subconscious mind... demanded honor!

A moment later, Meng Hao lifted his hand away, and blood sprayed out of Lin Cong's mouth. His expression was blank, and his body was still trembling. His mind was gone, and apparently, the only thing he had left... was his honor.

Meng Hao said nothing. He now knew that when Lin Cong had said that Xu Qing would die if he did, it had been a complete fabrication. Actually, Meng Hao had already come to the conclusion earlier that such a thing wasn't possible.

He took another look at Lin Cong, then pulled his hand back and tapped his forehead. A massive power poured through him, wiping out any life that was left. Lin Cong shuddered, and for a brief moment, his eyes became bright and lucid. Then he closed them... and died.

His corpse dropped down to the ground, but his bag of holding was snatched by Meng Hao. Inside was the Fourth Nation's World Seal.

"Qing'er..." he murmured, "so, you're a disciple of Ksitigarbha, on the Fourth Mountain...."

"Just wait for me, Qing'er. Once I'm out of this Windswept Realm, I'm coming for you!" Then he turned and disappeared in a flash of light.

He left the Fourth Nation, passing back through the central temple region and entering the Ninth Nation. All of a sudden, a tremor ran through him, and he turned to look back at the Fourth Nation.

“Something’s off! I killed the Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain. According to the natural law of the Windswept Realm, shouldn’t I be rewarded for breaking a previous record...?” Putting his thoughts aside of Xu Qing, he suddenly reviewed everything that had happened with Lin Cong. Finally, his eyes widened.

He then smacked his bag of holding and produced a promissory note. After looking at it carefully, he confirmed that it was Lin Cong’s promissory note, and then he suddenly smiled.

“These people definitely deserve to be in the Echelon. Han Qinglei had his schemes, and Lin Cong his plots. It seems that truly killing them won’t be easy.

“So, you’re not dead, Lin Cong. However, you will have no chances to rise to prominence here in the Windswept Realm. You’ll be forced to hide from me, not daring to even stick your head out!

“I may not be able to track you down and kill you, but I’ve slaughtered your heart. I’ve planted a shadow there, ensuring that I become your inner Devil!

“You’re not the first, nor will you be the last. The Windswept Realm... is the location where I, Meng Hao, will rise to prominence in the Nine Mountains and Seas! I will rise to prominence in the Echelon!

“When I leave this place, I will do so as... the number one in the Echelon!” He did not return to the Fourth Nation to continue searching for Lin Cong. Lin Cong’s life or death didn’t concern him anymore. With the status Xu Qing currently had in the Fourth Mountain, she was not somebody that could easily be trifled with.

Meng Hao flashed through the air toward Mount Whiteseal. After all of his years practicing cultivation, it was only during these battles that he had gradually formed a unique, domineering style that was all his own!

1. I have to be honest about something. In the original Chinese, it actually says that the feeling is impossible to describe. However, the following sentence then provides a description. We cleverly inserted the word “almost” to ensure that everything made sense...

Chapter 1108: Entering Allheaven Again!

Hidden beneath the domineering air, however, was something others could never detect... the con!

For example, Lin Cong's promissory note. Even Lin Cong knew nothing about that. He had unwittingly fallen for Meng Hao's scheme. That promissory note had come during their first battle, when Meng Hao utilized the Seven God Steps. When Lin Cong's attention had been fully preoccupied by the surging energy created by it, he secretly went about creating the promissory note.

He did it that way intentionally, just in case he didn't manage to kill Lin Cong, or if he escaped. That way, he wouldn't come out completely empty-handed. At the very least, he would have a promissory note. Then, the next time they met, he could loudly declare that Lin Cong owed him money!

He would never have imagined that his promissory note habit would end up providing proof that Lin Cong wasn't dead.

As for exactly why he wasn't dead, the answer came to him on the way back to Mount Whiteseal.

"Echelon cultivators can be killed twice without their soul being exterminated!" he murmured, thinking back to what Paragon Sea Dream had told him all those years ago. It was a special ability unique to the Echelon.

The only way for an Echelon cultivator to truly be exterminated, was to kill that person twice, and THEN... a third time. That last kill would be their final death. In turn, whoever killed them would be half a step into the Echelon.

The rest of that half step was to travel to the Ruins of Immortality in their Mountain and Sea, and find Paragon Sea Dream. Then they could get the other half of the mark, and truly become a new member of the Echelon.

As he sped through the air, Meng Hao reached up and touched the place

on his forehead where the Echelon mark was concealed.

At about the same time that Meng Hao returned to the Ninth Nation, something happened back in the Fourth Nation. During Lin Cong's flight, he had spit up a glob of blood, which had long since soaked into the ground. Now, that patch of ground suddenly trembled, and a hand stretched up.

The hand was as flawless as white jade, like that of a newborn baby. It trembled, and the earth shook for a moment before exploding out as a figure stood up.

It was... Lin Cong!

His face was pale, but his cultivation base was different than it had been earlier. Apparently... it was completely restored to its original peak. However, his body was trembling. After taking a few breaths, he roared:

"Meng Hao!" His face twisted with intense rage and hatred. "In the Fourth Mountain and Sea, in all the deadly situations I encountered, I never used up one of my lives! I never imagined that you would actually push me into a corner and kill me!

"The enmity between us is irreconcilable!" He gnashed his teeth, and he even thought about retaliating against Xu Qing after he got back to the Fourth Mountain, to use her to get revenge against Meng Hao. However, when he considered that Xu Qing was the Princess of the 49th Cavern, he realized that despite the fact that she was Meng Hao's weak spot, it was actually impossible for him to do anything to her.

The realization filled him with bitterness. He suddenly realized that, even though he was still alive, Meng Hao had become his inner Devil.

He stamped his foot down onto the ground, and then flew into the air toward the National Aura Mountain. There was no way to vent his overflowing hatred. Even if he felt that he couldn't exist under the same sky as Meng Hao, the next time they met, all he would do was flee. He did not dare to go up against him.

Currently, he was even wondering if Meng Hao knew that he wasn't

dead.

Naturally, Meng Hao was completely aware of that fact. Currently, he was landing on Mount Whiteseal, where he sat down cross legged and flicked his sleeve to produce two tongues of flame.

These were none other than the World Seals from the Fourth Nation and the Eighth Nation.

The two flames flickered up into the hand of the statue, where they lined up with the Ninth Nation's World Seal. The three flames made the Essences and natural laws even more majestic.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Not wasting any time, he focused on contemplation. He had long since realized that, after taking the World Seal of the Fourth Nation, he no longer possessed twenty percent of the Windswept Realm's qi flow, but rather, thirty percent.

As he contemplated enlightenment, time passed. The overall structure of the Windswept Realm changed due to the defeats of Lin Cong and Han Qinglei. The Fourth Nation and the Eighth Nation were routed, and were eliminated from the central battlefield.

The other six nations continued to fight their bloody battles. However, the Ninth Nation had risen to prominence in the war, causing the cultivators from the other nations to join forces against it in resistance.

Before long, the intense fighting led to a chaotic battle situation.

Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu began switching off with other cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, so that there were some of them constantly fighting, almost as if they were unwilling to return from the battlefield.

It was as if they could find peace in the fighting, and would not be influenced by their desires.

Half a month flashed by. The speed with which he was gaining enlightenment of the three World Seals was rapidly increased because of the blessing of thirty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm. By this point, he had gained enlightenment of nearly 500 Essences.

And he wasn't finished.

During the half month, the fighting in the central region changed as more Echelon cultivators gained enlightenment of their respective World Seals. The battles grew even more chaotic.

In order to snatch the World Seals from other nations, it was first necessary to weaken them, which could only be done by gaining an advantage in the central region. Under the control of the Echelon cultivators, the armies in the central region fought with increased intensity.

Occasionally, certain countries would suffer defeats, and the red beams of light coming from their pagodas would grow dim. At that point, other Echelon cultivators would enter that nation to begin fighting.

During the half month, fierce fighting went on in virtually all of the National Aura Mountains of the various nations. There were both victories and defeats, but through it all there were only two mountains that no one dared to enter!

One was the First Nation's Mountain of National Fate, which was controlled by the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain. No one dared to encroach on his territory.

The second nation was Meng Hao's Mount Whiteseal, in the Ninth Nation. Although all the other Echelon cultivators were aware of how many World Seals he had, after his battle with Han Qinglei, and then his defeat of Lin Cong, he had settled his position. None of the other Echelon cultivators were confident enough to take him on.

It was in this fashion that seven more days passed. Suddenly, a boundless light rose up from Mount Whiteseal, within which Meng Hao opened his eyes. He slowly stood up and made a grasping motion with his right hand, causing the three flames to fly over into his palm, where they vanished.

Three World Seals, 900 great Daos. 900 Essences. All of that information was burned into his heart. Although he wasn't able to actually wield any of them, the sense of accomplishment he felt caused his aura to

be completely different than before.

He looked more elegant than before, and as he stood there, it seemed as if he were connected with the whole world. The light began to fade away, and he closed his eyes. When he opened them again moments later, he suddenly produced his second Nirvana Fruit. His eyes glittered as he pushed the fruit into his forehead.

In the instant the Nirvana Fruit contacted his forehead, a familiar sensation filled him. A massive tempestuous roar filled his mind, causing him to feel as though his head were about to explode.

He began to grow taller. 15 meters. 24 meters. 30 meters. 39 meters....

His fleshly body was ripped and torn, and intense pain rushed through him that was nothing like the last time he had temporarily absorbed the second Nirvana Fruit. This time, his fleshly body was not in the Immortal Realm, but rather, in the Ancient Realm!

His Ancient Realm fleshly body rumbled as it grew. Of his nine Soul Lamps, two had previously been lit. Now, the third and fourth began to burn, and a tiny spark appeared in the fifth.

His fleshly body power was increasing explosively!

His heart began to pound loudly, and then, thunder began to boom around him, as if it were cheering him on!

A power more terrifying than his Ancient Realm fleshly body began to flourish within him.

Soon, he was 60 meters tall, and he looked like a giant, his head raised, surging energy giving rise to madly whipping winds.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

He trembled as a tempest raged inside of him, tearing him apart. It was almost as if his qi passageways were going to be completely destroyed.

The Nirvana Fruit was like a key that unlocked terrifying power within his blood. Once again, shocking fluctuations began to flow through his veins!

Meng Hao could clearly sense that his 123 Immortal meridians were now ripping apart and then forming back together into a single Immortal meridian!

Although it was only one Immortal meridian, it formed something like a painting, a painting which showed the outline of a perfect circle!

His cultivation base rose up rapidly, and his every breath seemed to cause peals of thunder to echo out as he sucked in all of the energy of Heaven and Earth that existed in the area.

Power like this was something that far exceeded the Immortal Emperor Realm.

The mountain shook, and the lands quaked. All of the living things in the Ninth Nation could suddenly sense the shocking and domineering power that now existed on Mount Whiteseal.

The people who could sense it most clearly were the disciples of the various sects in the Ninth Nation, especially Jian Daozi. His face fell as he and all the other cultivators of the Ninth Nation looked off into the distance with expressions of shock.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was surrounded by the color azure.

Azure represented the Allheaven! The Allheaven represented the infinite!

Radiant azure light radiated off of Meng Hao as he threw his head back and roared. The sky shook, and massive winds blew.

This time, Meng Hao was able to endure for twenty breaths of time before his body trembled, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He staggered backward as the Nirvana Fruit emerged and fell down into his hand.

Although he now looked quite disheveled, his eyes gleamed with obsession and excitement.

“Gaining enlightenment of the Essences really will help me absorb the second Nirvana Fruit!

“I now understand 900 Essences, which lets me stay in that terrifying state for twenty breaths of time, which is much longer than before. According to my calculations, if I can gain enlightenment of 3,000 Essences, then I should be able to... permanently remain in the Allheaven Immortal Realm!” This hope caused him to throw his head back and laugh loudly.

“Besides, the first time I tried to absorb my second Nirvana Fruit, it wasted much of the energy in my body, so much so that I couldn’t even stand up. But now... it only took thirty percent of my energy!”

Chapter 1109: The Echelon War Truly Begins!

As the Nirvana Fruit sank down, the shield surrounding Mount Whiteseal faded away, but the light shining off of Meng Hao grew stronger. He took a deep breath and then stepped off of the mountain and into the air.

The wind battered him, and although his hair whipped about, not a bit of his aura could be blown away. It was as if the energy belonging to Meng Hao couldn't be touched at all by the wind, but rather, influenced the entire world around him.

"I've already gained complete enlightenment of three World Seals. If I want to completely absorb the Nirvana Fruit... I'll need more sealing marks!" Meng Hao's energy rocketed up, and he overflowed with the desire to fight. His eyes flashed like lightning as he shot off into the distance.

As he left the Ninth Nation, his goal was to slaughter his way into other nations... to defeat their Echelon cultivators and steal their sealing marks!

He would take advantage of this opportunity in the Windswept Realm to seize... his greatest available good fortune, which was to become an...

Allheaven Immortal!

He would become number one in the Echelon!

BOOM!

He turned into a streak of bright light that sped through the sky for less time than it takes half an incense stick to burn. Then, he suddenly stopped and looked down toward the ground.

He was still in the Ninth Nation, and far below, he had just noticed a vein of Immortal jade deep under the ground. The human cultivator from the Mountain and Sea Realm was still there, and although he couldn't see Meng Hao, Meng Hao could see him.

The man appeared to be mired in madness, completely lost. When Meng Hao saw the Immortal jade, a feeling of desire suddenly rose up in his heart, but he immediately quashed it.

“I love money, but I’m my own master. I’ll never let material things control me!” he said coolly. As he crushed the invisible fetters, a shattering sound seemed to echo about in his mind. He turned away and ignored everything down below as he sped off into the distance.

In the final seven days in which Meng Hao had gained enlightenment of the World Seal, the Echelon cultivators in other parts of the Windswept Realm were all thrown into a state of chaos by the shocking events which occurred.

The First Nation’s Echelon cultivator attacked the Second Nation, completely defeating the Echelon cultivator there. Only by sacrificing one of his lives was he able to flee. Of course, the Second Nation’s World Seal was then completely undefended, and was taken away by the First Nation’s Echelon cultivator, who completely leveled the entire National Aura Mountain to get to it.

After that, the Echelon cultivators from the Fifth and Sixth Nations fought each other. The shocking battle shook Heaven and Earth, and resulted in both sides sustaining heavy injuries. In a critical moment, the First Nation’s Echelon cultivator appeared. He ignored the Third Nation’s mountain, passing directly through to the two fighting Echelon cultivators, whom he took on himself.

That battle was shocking to the extreme, and in the end, the entire Fifth Nation was destroyed. Their National Aura Mountain toppled, and in the end, both Echelon cultivators from the Fifth and Sixth Nations were defeated, and the Fifth Nation’s World Seal was taken.

No one knew whether or not the Fifth Nation’s Echelon cultivator was killed, but in either case, nobody could find him after the battle. The Sixth Nation’s Echelon cultivator returned to his National Aura Mountain, severely injured.

After these things happened, the First Nation’s Echelon cultivator

seemed to be invincible, capable of sweeping over all of Heaven and Earth, leaving everyone astonished.

Of the Windswept Realm's nine World Seals, the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain and Meng Hao each had three. The others remained in the Third, Sixth and Seventh Nations respectively.

The war had spread out from the central region to the Echelon members themselves. It was about that time that Meng Hao reached the Eighth Nation.

He didn't pause for even a moment, speeding through the air like a meteor, passing over the Eighth Nation as he headed toward the Seventh Nation. His aura surged mightily, growing ever-stronger.

Before long, he reached the Seventh Nation, and when he entered it, intense pressure roiled out from its National Aura Mountain.

The source was none other than the Echelon cultivator of the Seventh Nation, Yuwen Jian, the young man with the incredibly murderous aura. He currently stood on the mountain peak, hand curled around the haft of a long spear, looking up into the sky with a gleam of anticipation in his eyes. 1

"It's not my custom to sit around waiting for people to come fight me," he said coolly. He took a step forward, abandoning the defenses of the National Aura Mountain as he flew directly in Meng Hao's direction.

The entire Seventh Nation trembled as Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian sped toward each other through the sky!

When Meng Hao caught sight of Yuwen Jian, he didn't slow down in the least bit. Instead, he sped up and prepared to attack.

When Yuwen Jian saw Meng Hao, he let out a cold snort. His murderous aura exploded to the sky, and just like Meng Hao, he didn't hold back, but instead, pushed himself faster.

In the blink of an eye, the two of them collided in midair above the Seventh Nation.

A huge boom rang out, and everything shook. A massive fissure ripped open in the sky between them, and a huge shockwave exploded out.

“Meng Hao!” cried Yuwen Jian, flying backward. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, after which he threw his head back and laughed. His entire person exploded with the desire to do battle. He hefted his long spear, which thrummed as countless slain souls suddenly appeared, looking incredibly ferocious.

“Listen up, fool, I’m Yuwen Jian, Echelon cultivator from the Seventh Mountain! Meng Hao, do you dare to make a bet with me? If you win, I won’t just hand over the Seventh Nation’s World Seal, but I’ll trade it with you! The prerequisite is that you qualify to fight me! If you lose, then you have to give one of your three World Seals to me!” Yuwen Jian’s voice echoed about, and he took a step forward, a domineering air swirling around him continuously.

Meng Hao also began to stride forward, eyes glittering. From their initial contact moments ago, Meng Hao could instantly tell that Yuwen Jian’s fleshly body was at roughly the same level as his own.

“A body cultivator!” he thought, his eyes gleaming brightly. He had an Ancient Realm fleshly body, yet didn’t come close to being an authentic body cultivator. In fact, the only true body cultivator he had ever met was the burly Demonic cultivator. However, that man was an amateur, and couldn’t be considered truly powerful in terms of body cultivation.

But now... Meng Hao could sense that Yuwen Jian was a true body cultivator!

Looking him over, he could see a faintly red glow coming off of Yuwen Jian. “He must have bathed in the blood of a God!” he thought.

“Well, do you dare?” asked Yuwen Jian, his voice booming. He swept his spear out in front of him, causing a massive rumbling sound to ring out. The air vibrated, and even seemed to be on the verge of shattering, as a massive energy surged off of Yuwen Jian,

He stood there like a celestial warrior, bursting with the mad desire to fight.

“I could fart better proposals than that bet of yours,” Meng Hao said coolly. “But as for your challenge to a duel... how could I not accept!?” He clenched his right hand into a fist and then unleashed a punch.

His fist and Yuwen Jian’s spear almost instantly slammed into each other, and an ear-splitting boom rang out. The flexible spear absorbed the backlash and was deflected away, and Yuwen Jian fell back again. Blood poured out of his mouth, and when he looked up, his expression was even more maddened than before. He tossed the spear aside, licked the blood off of his lips, and stared at Meng Hao with bloodshot eyes.

“That runt Han Qinglei wasn’t a match for you, and you also defeated the sissypants Lin Cong. You’re strong, Meng Hao. But... I’m even stronger!

“Did you really think that Lin Cong was actually the second most powerful after the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven?” 2

“That list was made thirty years ago, and besides, being in the Echelon requires finding your own correct path. The difference in power between us members was once vast. Back then, I might not have been a match for Lin Cong. But now... I could defeat him easily!

“Even Dao-Heaven’s title of number one most powerful Echelon cultivator... is just that, a title! He isn’t necessarily the most powerful!” Yuwen Jian laughed, and his desire to do battle surged. He then charged toward Meng Hao in a blur, unleashing a vicious palm strike.

As the palm ripped through the air, sonic booms echoed out. The air around Meng Hao distorted, as if power from all directions were being sucked in by Yuwen Jian’s palm strike.

Meng Hao didn’t flinch back. He strode forward, unleashing the Seven God Steps. However, in that moment, Yuwen Jian smiled ferociously, threw his head back and roared.

“Sealing Magic!” he cried, causing the sky to tremble. The power of a sealing mark descended not toward Meng Hao, but the area around him.

It transformed into a cage, with Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian being locked inside. However, because of the cage, Meng Hao was unable to utilize the Seven God Steps to borrow energy from the surroundings.

“I was ready for that Daoist magic!” laughed Yuwen Jian, advancing forward again.

He roared, and his body suddenly began to grow larger. In the blink of an eye, he was fully twice as large as before, and from the look of it, half of the power of his fleshly body was now converged in his right arm. He was clearly vastly different than moments ago, and as he swung his right arm, shocking power erupted.

His qi and blood rumbled, and anyone who was sensitive to auras, even if they were some distance away, would be able to sense the towering bloody glow that rose off of him. It was like a bright lamp in the middle of the night!

“DIE!” he roared as his fist rocketed out with power seemingly capable of shaking Heaven and Earth!

Meng Hao’s face was calm. Freeing himself from the cage wouldn’t be difficult. However, now that he had encountered a true body cultivator like Yuwen Jian, his desire to fight boiled hotter than ever.

As Yuwen Jian closed in, Meng Hao clenched his hand into a fist and leaped forward. Instantly, an aura was unleashed that seemed capable of destroying the Heavens, and exterminating all life.

That power of extermination converged in Meng Hao’s fist, creating a true... power of Life-Extermination!

The Life-Extermination Fist!

The air around them shattered as two streaks of light could be seen speeding through the air toward each other. Then, Meng Hao’s punch collided with the power of Yuwen Jian’s fleshly body, and a huge boom echoed out.

RUUUUUUMMMBLLLLLE!

Heaven was rent and the Earth collapsed. Everything quaked violently. Vibrations ran through Meng Hao as he fell back several dozen paces. The shocking power from body cultivator Yuwen Jian left him shaken and visibly moved. And yet, his desire to fight grew stronger.

Blood sprayed out of Yuwen Jian's mouth as he staggered backward several hundred meters. When he looked up, an invincible will to fight could be seen in his eyes. He threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Exhilarating! Alright Meng Hao, let's see if you can handle another punch. If you survive, then I'll happily loan you my World Seal to contemplate!”

*

1. Yuwen Jian's name in Chinese is 宇文坚 yǔwén jiān. Yuwen is an uncommon two-character surname. Jian means “strong” or “unyielding.”
2. Unfortunately, this is a point where because of the nature of Chinese, a minor spoiler is necessitated. Essentially, “Dao-Heaven” is a Daoist name, not this guy's actual name. However, in Chinese, you wouldn't necessarily know that. The two characters are 道天, which are “Dao” and “Heaven” respectively. However, “Dao” could also be a surname, so at first sight you wouldn't know it was a Daoist name.

Chapter 1110: What Are You Doing!?

As Yuwen Jian's laughter rang out in the air, he suddenly took a deep breath, and then a sound like that of a windstorm exploded up around him.

The air in the area collapsed, as if his single breath was sucking in all of the energy of Heaven and Earth around him to merge into his body.

The result was that his body grew rapidly until he was over 18 meters tall!

"Six Times Nine God Body, First Transformation!" Yuwen Jian roared as his body then explosively grew from 18 meters to a shocking 27 meters tall. He looked like a giant, hovering there in midair, exuding shocking pressure. 1

He lifted his right hand up and clenched it into a fist, which he held out toward Meng Hao. It was a simple motion, but the cracking sounds which rang out as a result caused the air to shatter. He let out another roar, and he looked like a mountain as he then charged toward Meng Hao.

He was enormous, but he moved with unbelievable speed. In the blink of an eye he was in front of Meng Hao, his enormous fist punching out with terrifying, exterminating power.

Meng Hao's eyes glowed with a strange light. His blood surged through his veins, and his desire to fight was strong as Yuwen Jian's fist closed in. He took a deep breath, and although his energy didn't surge in the same way Yuwen Jian's had, but his aura still shot up madly with that single breath.

A madness rose up, a madness like that of Bedevilment. It was a determination like nothing else, something that disregarded everything, even the shattering of all bones, in the pursuit of cutting out a swath of blood.

That entire will was focused into a single punch that rumbled through the air. This was Meng Hao's second body cultivator fist strike.

The Self-Immolation Fist! Also known as... the Bedevilment Fist!

A huge boom filled the air as Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian slammed into each other. The lands trembled, mountains collapsed, and the sky flashed. Meng Hao let out a muffled grunt and staggered backward about twenty paces. When he looked up, he saw Yuwen Jian flying through the air like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying from his mouth. Meng Hao's single punch had sent him spinning, and it looked like his body was on the verge of being shredded to pieces.

"Second transformation!

"Third transformation!

"Fourth transformation!" Yuwen Jian's voice boomed out as he fell back, and his body continued to grow larger until he was 108 meters tall. Now he really was a giant, with explosive energy. Roaring, he finally came to a stop, and then braced himself and prepared to fight back against Meng Hao's Bedevilment Fist. As he strode forward, he said, "Fifth transformation!"

Another roar could be heard as he grew even taller. By the time Meng Hao reached him, he was 135 meters tall. From a distance, Meng Hao looked completely insignificant.

However, that seemingly insignificant frame contained a power that caused even Yuwen Jian's fleshly body to tremble.

Meng Hao's eyes were as cold as ice. Yuwen Jian had said his punch from moments ago would be his last one, but here he was attacking again. Meng Hao was losing patience. Suddenly, his fist opened up into a palm. Such a motion should have caused a drop in his momentum, but instead, shocking ripples spread out.

It was as if his palm had fused with world to become the will of Heaven!

As of this moment, outside of the sealed cage area, a massive pressure seemed to be weighing down, an awakening aura that pierced through the seal and settled onto Meng Hao.

His open palm then slowly clenched back into a fist, causing the aura to

explode out like the will of Heaven, unleashing an intense, indescribable killing intent!

“God Slaying!” Meng Hao said coolly.

However, in the moment that he spoke, the attacking Yuwen Jian suddenly shivered as he felt a sensation of unprecedented deadly crisis well up inside of him. It was indescribably intense, and he had the premonition that if he went through with his attack, he would end up dead!!

“Dammit! How can he be so strong!? He must have been holding back his strength when he was fighting with Lin Cong!” Yuwen Jian’s face fell, and his surging energy suddenly faded away. He instantly backed up, shrinking down to his normal size. Then, his face extremely serious, he angrily said, “Brother Meng Hao, what are you doing! Well? What do you think you’re doing!?!? Didn’t we have an agreement? We were just comparing fighting tips, right? I can’t believe you’re using lethal attacks!?!?”

“As brothers, this really pains me! We might have just met each other, but we became friends at first sight! There’s no need try to kill each other! You qualify to exchange World Seals with me! Hahaha! Brother, I already said that last fist strike was my last one, and I always keep my word.” Yuwen Jian didn’t seem to feel the least bit uncomfortable or embarrassed to switch from being arrogant and condescending to calling Meng Hao brother. His expression was one of complete sincerity, just as a body cultivator should be; he exuded an air of complete honesty and forthrightness.

“About trading for the World Seal, Brother Meng Hao, why don’t we go to the Seventh Nation’s National Aura Mountain together? Trading for the World Seal means that we won’t have to damage our relationship. Plus, you can gain enlightenment of further essences. What possible downside could there be?”

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao’s face, and he cleared his throat as he relaxed his fist.

“That would be for the best.”

“Please, follow me!” Yuwen Jian gave an inward sigh of relief, then laughed heartily as he led the way. He and Meng Hao transformed into two beams of bright light that shot toward the Seventh Nation’s National Aura Mountain. Before long, they arrived, and since Meng Hao had been invited by Yuwen Jian, the National Aura Mountain’s defenses did not target him.

Once they arrived at the statue, Yuwen Jian made a grasping motion, causing the flame of the World Seal to float over and hover atop his palm.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he extended his hand in a similar fashion, causing a World Seal flame to appear.

The two of them stared at each other warily for a moment before waving hands and exchanging the two flames.

Yuwen Jian smiled, then nodded and sat down cross-legged. He didn’t immediately begin to contemplate enlightenment, but rather, looked at Meng Hao and waited for him to begin. After all, once the process started, there was no way to suddenly stop it. If one person started without the other, neither would feel comfortable about the situation.

Furthermore, Yuwen Jian wasn’t willing to just hand over the Seventh Nation’s World Seal permanently.

After a moment of thought, Meng Hao waved his left hand, causing blackpod imps to spread out around the area and act as Dharma Protectors. Then he sat down and looked at the flame in his hand.

Yuwen Jian took a deep breath, causing bright lights to begin to swirl around him, which transformed into a protective shield. They exchanged a final glance, and without saying anything else, simultaneously sank into contemplation.

Immediately, tremors ran through their bodies. Remaining ever vigilant against each other, both began to focus on Essences and natural law.

Time passed by. Three days later, they had both reached a critical juncture in their contemplation. Although Yuwen Jian had not previously

received a blessing of qi flow from the Windswept Realm like Meng Hao had, this was his home turf, and therefore, his process of enlightenment went quickly.

Conversely, Meng Hao was not on his native Mount Whiteseal, but instead on the Seventh Nation's National Aura Mountain. That should have made his speed of enlightenment much slower, but he had the benefit of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm. Therefore, although his speed was slightly slower, it was a speed that he could accept, putting him just slightly ahead of Yuwen Jian.

However, on the fourth day, just when Meng Hao was on the verge of completion, the pressure in the Seventh Nation increased dramatically, and rumbling sounds filled the air.

Yuwen Jian's eyes snapped open, and a grim look appeared on his face.

"Someone's coming!" he growled. Being in the midst of contemplating enlightenment, however, there was very little he could do. He looked over at Meng Hao, who had also opened his eyes, and was frowning as he looked off into the distance.

Not too much time passed before three beams of light appeared, speeding through the air. In the lead position was a young man with half-black, half-white hair. He wasn't just handsome, he was beautiful, and had a glittering Echelon mark on his forehead.

He was followed by two other cultivators, a man and a woman. Both appeared to be young, but they emanated terrifying cultivation base auras. They were in the Ancient Realm, with five extinguished Soul Lamps each. Furthermore, the feeling they gave off was not that of ordinary Ancient Realm cultivation bases. They seemed more powerful, indicating that these were Chosen.

"Dao-Heaven's number one follower, the eleventh Echelon cultivator, Hai Dongqing!!" 2 Yuwen Jian's face flickered, and his eyes went wide.

"Follower? Hai Dongqing?" Meng Hao asked.

"Hai Dongqing used to be like me, an Echelon cultivator from the

Seventh Mountain. However, after he was defeated by Dao-Heaven, he inexplicably joined his entourage. As an Echelon cultivator, it's a complete disgrace to become the follower of some other person!" Yuwen Jian gritted his teeth and stared at the three incoming cultivators. "Dammit, shouldn't Dao-Heaven's goal be the Third and Sixth Nations? I can't believe he's ignoring them and focusing here!" Yuwen Jian's face flickered, and he cursed inwardly. His contemplation of enlightenment was still incomplete, making it impossible for him to fight.

"Do you have a grudge with Hai Dongqing?" Meng Hao asked suddenly.

Yuwen Jian's face darkened further, and he nodded. "I killed him once, years ago."

Considering that they were both Echelon cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, there was little wonder that they had a hard time maintaining a good relationship, and had ended up fighting to the death.

Meng Hao sat there quietly for a moment while Yuwen Jian ground his teeth. Although Yuwen Jian couldn't attack personally, he could summon help. He smacked his hand down onto the ground, and rumbling sounds echoed out through the Seventh Nation. Shockingly, numerous holes suddenly appeared all over his body, which then exploded, revealing a group of figures.

They were puppets, dozens of them, with powerful cultivation bases. Meng Hao's eyes widened slightly, but given that Yuwen Jian was also in the Echelon, it was only natural that he would have some tricks that he wouldn't reveal without good cause.

Almost as soon as the puppets appeared, Hai Dongqing began to descend from above, his hair floating around him, his body radiating shocking energy.

"So, we meet again, Yuwen Jian!" Hatred gleamed in Hai Dongqing's eyes. His voice was soft and effeminate as he floated over. His gaze then shifted to Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao? I never imagined I would find you here! Oh well, it doesn't matter. I guess today I'll get to take four World Seals for Elder Brother

Dao-Heaven!”

Yuwen Jian’s eyes went wide, and he started cursing loudly: “Elder Brother Dao-Heaven!? What bullshit! You’re nothing more than Dao-Heaven’s lackey, you fool! How shameless do you have to be to join someone else’s entourage, huh Hai Dongqing?”

*

1. Yuwen Jian’s “God Body” increases his height by multiples of “zhang” with each transformation. It starts with 6 “zhang” or 18 meters, and then increases by multiples of 9 after that.
2. Hai Dongqing’s name in Chinese is 海东青 hǎi dōng qīng . Hai means “sea” but can also be a surname. Dong means “east.” Qing is a color, usually green, blue, cyan, or azure, but sometimes black.

Chapter 1111: Fatality!

“Shut the hell up!” roared Hai Dongqing, looking extremely irritated. As an Echelon cultivator, the fact that he had ended up becoming Dao-Heaven’s follower was actually a very painful matter to him. Few people would ever dare to bring up the matter in his presence, not unless there was a blood feud between them. Even other Echelon cultivators wouldn’t provoke him in such a way.

Only Yuwen Jian dared to do so. Both of them started out in the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and had numerous conflicts going back throughout the years. They had long since reached the point where neither could tolerate the other being alive. The venomous words uttered just now by Yuwen Jian caused Hai Dongqing to give a cold harrumph and then step forward. The wave of his hand instantly caused an illusory sword to shoot forward.

It was an azure-colored sword that emanating blinding sword light. As soon as it appeared, it split apart into 100,000 separate swords, which soared through the air toward Yuwen Jian on the National Aura Mountain.

“Why the hell should I shut up, fool?” Yuwen Jian cursed. “You’re Dao-Heaven’s lackey! What, you’re afraid of people saying it out loud? I won’t shut up, and furthermore, I’ll say it again. You’re a lackey, a dog! Come on, dog, try to bite me!” He stuck his chin up into the air as if to say, what are you gonna do about it?

Rumbling filled the air as the 100,000 swords slashed toward the mountain, slamming into the protective shield and causing it to distort. At the same time, the two cultivators off to the side laughed coldly, waving their hands to cause two streams of qi to swirl out, one black and one white. They merged together in midair to form a gigantic spike, which stabbed down toward the mountain.

Booms rang out as the shield twisted. However, Yuwen Jian’s curses continued to echo through the air.

“Come on, bite me, fool!” he raged. “Motherfudging Hai Dongqing, you bitch slut! If you have the skill, come and bite me! If you dare to come at

me, then I'll screw you!"

Meng Hao remained off to the side, looking on with a strange expression. He suddenly realized that during their fight, Yuwen Jian had actually spoken to him quite respectfully. They hadn't been fighting to the death, but had they been, Meng Hao had the feeling that the harshness of Yuwen Jian's cursing could only be matched by the parrot.

Outside the shield, Hai Dongqing looked more furious than ever. Staring coldly at Yuwen Jian, he waved his hand, causing the number of illusory swords spinning around him to increase to 500,000, radiating brilliant light as they slammed into the shield.

The shield was weakening, and obviously these three cultivators were fully prepared to fight, even in the battles near the central temple.

"Slut! Charlatan!" roared Yuwen Jian. "You don't have any balls at all, you fruitcake! Why don't you use the same skills you use when you service Dao-Heaven! Come on!"

"Hai Dongqing, considering we're both from the Seventh Mountain, you can tell me the truth, right? Between you and Dao-Heaven, who gives it and who takes it? I'm really curious!" As Yuwen Jian let off a constant stream of curses, he took moments here and there to lower his voice and speak to Meng Hao.

"Whenever I see this slut I can't help but curse him. Sorry for getting you involved in this, brother. If your enlightenment comes quickly, then get out of here before you get killed. Just forget about me. After all, if you stick around and I get killed, then your death won't come too long after.

"But... we might stand a better chance if we stand together. AND we'll probably die if we split up!"

"Plus, if you leave, then you won't be able to take this World Seal with you. Without someone to distract them, you'd never get away.

"Besides, since you have the Seventh Nation's World Seal, if you leave with it, they'll definitely chase you down."

"Anything else you want to say?" Meng Hao said coldly.

Yuwen Jian cleared his throat. He turned to let out another string of curses at Hai Dongqing, then turned back and smiled wryly at Meng Hao.

“Of course there’s more, but there’s not enough time to explain it clearly. Anyway, go ahead and leave, brother! I’ll hold them off for as long as I can!”

Even as he spoke, a huge crack opened up in the shield. Tearing sounds could be heard as the rip expanded, causing the entire shield to ripple. Clearly, it would only be able to hold out for a little bit longer. Hai Dongqing’s bone-deep hatred for Yuwen Jian caused him to attack with increased fervor.

The male and female cultivator had profound cultivation bases. Although they weren’t in the Echelon, and the feeling they gave off couldn’t compare exactly, it was similar. They made another attack, causing two huge spikes to stab down toward the shield.

Murderous gleams could be seen in their eyes. They weren’t here to interfere with the matter between Yuwen Jian and Hai Dongqing. They were here for Meng Hao, and would surely receive an incredible reward if they killed him.

The man and the woman were both staring at him with clear killing intent, and even a gleam of avarice. They obviously wanted to take advantage of his inability to attack... to cut him down.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly rose to his feet. He clenched his right hand into a fist, causing the Seventh Nation’s World Seal to fuse into his hand.

Next, he performed an incantation gesture, then waved his finger toward the shield. Immediately, numerous mountain ranges appeared outside, which smashed down toward Hai Dongqing and the other two cultivators.

“Finished with your enlightenment?” Yuwen Jian asked, eyes glittering brightly.

Meng Hao snorted coldly. Ignoring Yuwen Jian completely, he shot up into the air toward the shield. As he appeared outside, he waved his hand,

summoning the Paragon Bridge.

As the Paragon Bridge descended, Hai Dongqing's face flickered. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing a sword to appear that radiated an ancient aura.

The sword was broken, with only a finger-length segment of the tip remaining. However, it radiated a frigid aura that caused a huge wind to whip up as soon as it appeared. At the same time, the aura of a Paragon spread out.

This was Hai Dongqing's Paragon magic. With a roar, he shoved both hands out in front of him, causing the broken sword tip to fly toward the Paragon Bridge.

As soon as these two grand Paragon magics appeared, Meng Hao extended his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. His eyes glittered, and electricity danced around him. Suddenly, he switched places with the female cultivator.

In the blink of an eye, and before anyone could react, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then waved his hand toward the male cultivator.

The Essence of Divine Flame erupted out explosively, causing the man's face to fall. He tried to retreat, but before he could get very far, Meng Hao transformed into a golden roc, attacking in unison with the flames to slash violently at the man's chest.

Flames engulfed the man, and he screamed miserably. At the same time, brilliant light flickered around him, and he performing an incantation gesture, causing a suit of armor to cover him. Although it provided some bit of protection, the Divine Flame still bored in, inflicting intense pain. He gritted his teeth, forcing his mind into clarity, then began to fall back. However, how could Meng Hao possibly let him flee? The golden roc flickered as he returned to human form, then clenched his right hand into a fist and unleashed the Bedevilment Fist.

A boom rang out as he struck the man's chest. The armor exploded, and blood sprayed out. A look of shock covered the man's ashen face; he

quickly crushed a pearl between his teeth, and as Meng Hao's second punch closed in, his body turned illusory, and the fist struck nothing but air.

The man fell back anxiously, screaming,

"Save me!"

That pearl was a life-saving magical item, something he hadn't used for a very long time, and normally kept concealed inside of his tongue. However, it only took a few moments of battle with Meng Hao before he was forced to unleash its power.

Everything that was happening takes some time to describe, but in truth, from the time Meng Hao unleashed the Paragon Bridge to the moment he attacked the man, only enough time passed for a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. It was so quick that no one had any time to react.

Hai Dongqing unleashed his Paragon magic a bit too slowly, making it difficult to come to the man's aid. As for the woman, she was now quite some distance away. She was about to use a minor teleportation, but apparently Meng Hao had predicted that would happen. He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger at the woman.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex transformed into invisible ripples that caused a tremor to run through the woman; she was now incapable of teleporting, or of doing anything else to interfere.

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. Without speaking a word, he shot toward the man like lightning. With the wave of his hand, 123 Immortal meridians exploded with power, and 33 Heavens descended. They transformed into the paw of a beast, which slashed at the retreating cultivator.

A boom could be heard, and the man let out a miserable shriek. His chest burst into a cloud of blood and gore, and a look of complete and utter panic filled his face, as if he could sense death closing in on him. How could he ever have imagined that he would collapse like a brittle branch under the attacks of his opponent, without even the chance to

fight back?

He couldn't help but think back to the fight between Meng Hao and Lin Cong, and now he knew how Lin Cong felt. He was denied any chance to do anything, and only continued to descend into further danger.

Hai Dongqing was in a rage. His body flashed as he performing an incantation gesture, causing 1,000,000 streams of sword qi to burst out, slashing toward Meng Hao to block his path to the male cultivator.

The woman's face was filled with a murderous look, and she looked incredibly anxious. She and the man were beloved partners, so at the moment, her heart was tearing apart. She even burned her life force to extricate herself from the Eighth Hex. Blood sprayed from her mouth as she charged toward Meng Hao.

"Stay your hand!" she screamed shrilly.

The man, who had just been on the receiving end of a series of successful attacks on the part of Meng Hao, gritted his teeth and fell back again. As long as he could hold off long enough for his partner to arrive, he would be saved. Only a few breaths of time would be sufficient.

However, it was in this moment that Meng Hao suddenly burst into action. He took a few steps, and his energy surged dramatically. The air around him distorted, causing Hai Dongqing and the female cultivator's minds to reel.

Heavy injuries were instantly inflicted upon the male cultivator. He let out a bloodcurdling scream as Meng Hao closed in and unleashed another fist strike onto his chest.

The man's body instantly exploded into pieces. However, he wasn't dead yet. His Immortal soul shot out intact, and quickly made to flee. However, Meng Hao let out a harrumph.

The sound contained the power of his Dao Divinity Scripture, an intense divine sense attack that caused the man's Immortal soul to tremble. In the same moment, Meng Hao's right hand made a grasping motion, and the bone-tip spear appeared, which he then hurled toward the Immortal soul.

Before even waiting to see the result, Meng Hao turned and let out a punch toward the shrieking female cultivator.

Booms echoed out as blow landed. Blood sprayed out of the woman's mouth, and she was sent tumbling backward. The shockwave from the impact spread out and slammed into the incoming beams of sword qi from Hai Dongqing, causing them to stall in midair.

It was in that moment that the bone-tip spear stabbed into the forehead of the Immortal soul. It trembled, and a look of disbelief appeared on its face as the soul shattered into pieces, completely destroyed!

"NO!!" screamed the woman, trembling, her eyes filling with a look of disbelief and madness.

Chapter 1112: Goodwill!

The actual time it took all of these things to happen was only ten breaths!

Ten breaths of time earlier, Meng Hao had emerged from within the shield. Ten breaths of time later, one enemy was already dead!

That was a true fatality! Simultaneously taking on three people and killing one of them almost instantly!

It was quick and efficient, without the slightest bit of sloppiness to it. Meng Hao had anticipated every move up to the killing blow precisely and accurately. Not only did it show how ruthless Meng Hao was, and how rapidly he took control of the situation, the fact that he had used so many divine abilities in unison... left all onlookers shocked at the level of his battle prowess.

Yuwen Jian's eyes widened, and he took a deep breath. He had known before that Meng Hao was strong, but he had never imagined that he could actually be... this strong. He asked himself if he could kill that male cultivator in only ten breaths of time, and realized that it would have been difficult. And that was without taking into account the two people trying to interfere.

However, Meng Hao had accomplished it all as smoothly as flowing water. Then, he spun around and attack the female cultivator, borrowing her power to also knock aside the incoming sword qi at the same time, even utilizing it to increase his speed.

"I can't believe it.... He's not retreating, he's attacking!" When Yuwen Jian saw what was happening, his mind spun. All of a sudden, he realized that the most shocking and terrifying thing about Meng Hao wasn't his power, but rather, his fighting style and domineering air.

Virtually anyone else in his position would take advantage of the moment to flee, to get a bit of distance from the opponent before resuming the fight. Not so with Meng Hao. He took advantage of the situation to attack. He moved with such incredible speed that, within the

blink of an eye, he was almost upon the female cultivator.

The fact that he made such a choice caused Yuwen Jian to inhale sharply. In the woman's moment of emotional instability, he chose to attack her to gain an advantage.

"However, that's also the most dangerous decision. If it were me, I would go for Hai Dongqing!"

"DIIIIEEEEEEEEEE!" the woman howled madly as Meng Hao closed in. It almost seemed as if she had lost her mind, as if the only thing she could think about was killing Meng Hao, no matter the cost.

She roared as her body burst into flames, then she sacrificed her longevity, exchanging it for a momentary return to youthful vigor. She performed an incantation gesture, causing countless flower petals to swirl around her, which turned into a tempest, a sea of flowers that surged to overwhelm Meng Hao.

In the moment before he was inundated, he suddenly waved his hand, causing a host of black pods to fly out. Popping sounds could be heard as they transformed into tiny imps that sped toward the female cultivator, uttering soundless screams.

Clearly, they hoped to take advantage of her mental instability to possess her.

The blackpod imps bored into her body, attempting to forcibly possess her. She began to tremble, and then her face flickered. A miserable scream rang out, and her divine ability lost stability. In the end, Meng Hao didn't even avoid it, he simply walked through the tempest of flower petals.

Next, he turned into a golden roc. Golden light flashed as he closed in on the woman, then returned to human form and unleashed a fist strike.

A boom could be heard as blood sprayed from the woman's mouth. She flew backward, expression twisted. The blackpod imps were all failing in their possession attempts, and yet upon failure, they would burst out of her and unleash divine sense attacks, causing the already flustered woman to descend further into madness.

All of this happened in the mere time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Hai Dongqing's face fell; he couldn't simply allow Meng Hao to kill another person. If that happened, he himself would be in danger. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture, causing nine illusory swords to materialize around him.

"Subdue Heaven! Nine Stifling Swords!" In unison with his roar, the nine swords began to emit a droning sound. Unexpectedly, in the very middle of the nine swords, the illusory image of an old man appeared. Although his face wasn't clear, he emanated a shocking sword will that exploded out, causing the nine swords to shoot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned slightly. At first, the nine swords hadn't seemed very intimidating. However, once the illusory old man appeared among them, they changed, as if they were suddenly intelligent. In fact, their sword aura redoubled.

He could probably dodge the incoming swords, but if he did, he would lose his chance to slay the female cultivator, giving her time to recover and force out the rest of the blackpod imps. If she and Hai Dongqing joined forces to attack together, it would be very troublesome.

These thoughts flashed through Meng Hao's mind, and then a flash of determination could be seen in his eyes. Without the slightest hesitation, he ignored the incoming nine swords, transformed into a golden roc, and shot toward the woman, slashing at her with his talons.

The woman screamed miserably as her flesh was flayed, causing blood to spurt out everywhere. Suddenly, her eyes grew clear, and more blackpod imps were ejected out of her. However, doing so caused more divine sense attacks to be levied against her, making her tremble and cough up more blood.

Enduring the divine sense assault, the woman opened her mouth, causing a blood-colored beam of light to fly out. It immediately transformed into a blood parasol, which spread out to deflect the incoming attacks.

Meng Hao didn't pause for a moment. He waved his right hand, causing

a gale-force wind to spring up. A Blood Demon head appeared, roaring as it slashed into the blood parasol. Meng Hao in golden roc form then sped through the illusory Blood Demon head, clenching his right hand into a fist which he lashed out toward the woman's forehead. It was at this point that the first of the nine swords, the fastest, pierced through the void into Meng Hao's back. After stabbing into him, it vanished, transforming into a sword will that slashed around destructively inside him.

He gave a muffled grunt, and his right hand trembled, giving the woman an opportunity to try to dodge. Meng Hao gave a cold snort and continued to deliver the strike, missing her forehead, but connecting with her chest.

Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and her chest collapsed into a mass of gore. She sped back, borrowing the momentum of his blow to force out some more blackpod imps. Her eyes were now even clearer, and as she stared at Meng Hao, she waved her hand, causing a red mist to sweep out and cover her entire body. Behind Meng Hao, three more swords bore down.

Pop! Pop! Pop!

Three swords stabbed into him, transforming into destructive sword wills. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and then suddenly, his left eye glittered. The starstone therein then spread out explosively, causing him to transform into a planet that shot toward the red mist. A moment later, he had smashed through it, and was directly in front of the woman.

The female cultivator's eyes went wide, and her hands flew out, causing numerous magical items to appear. Furthermore, a suit of armor suddenly covered her. However, almost as soon as the magical items appeared, they were crushed by Meng Hao's divine abilities.

Her shields shattered and her armor collapsed into pieces. She appeared to be just on the verge of dying when, all of a sudden, a pendant which hung around her neck began to emanate a soft light.

Bright light covered her, which just barely took on the shape of a man, who then wrapped her up in his arms and flew backward.

That man was none other than the male cultivator Meng Hao had slain moments ago!

It wasn't a clone, but rather a soul fragment, branded into the pendant, which then became a life-saving magical item. It was the last memory of the man that existed for her in the whole world. Once used up, it would vanish forever.

"NO!" Tears streamed down the woman's face. Although she was retreating, her heart was already broken.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the planet was blocked, incapable of killing the woman. Meng Hao appeared in his usual form, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. He sighed softly.

"I wasn't looking to kill anybody, but you people started this fight. If I didn't kill you, you would have killed me. Perhaps you two loved each other, but... why did you have to come here and provoke me?" He shook his head and advanced, forming his right hand into a fist. When he punched out, the illusory man who was protecting the woman began to vanish.

"Well, never mind. Even though we're enemies, if I don't kill you, you'll try to kill me. Considering how you feel about each other, I'll... help you out a bit." With that, he stopped punching, and instead waved his hand to cause Divine Flame to explode out. It transformed into a sea of fire, which he sent to engulf the woman and the soul fragment.

The weakened woman instantly began to be burned up by the flames. Her body rapidly turned into ash, but her Immortal soul didn't vanish. Instead, both of their souls were wrapped up by the Divine Flame, which then began to carry them up into the Heavens.

"This Divine Flame will open the river to the Yellow Springs. The natural laws of the Windswept Realm might be incomplete, but it surely still has an underworld." He then punched upward toward the Heavens, causing the sky to tremble. The Divine Flame ripped open the sky to reveal a huge illusory river, pitch-black, within which flowed numerous sleeping souls.

The souls of the man and the woman entered the black river at the same

time. As they sank down into the river, the man's soul fragment turned to look at Meng Hao. There was no longer any hatred in his eyes, but instead a complicated look that eventually turned into gratitude.

Then they vanished.

Meng Hao turned to look behind him. He lifted his hands, and the five remaining incoming swords ground to a halt. They radiated killing intent, but they did not advance any further.

Meng Hao's face was pale white, his cultivation base surging. Seeing Meng Hao block his swords caused Hai Dongqing's face to darken. Forcing down his shock, he let out an enraged shout and then shot forward.

Performing an incantation gesture, he caused 1,000,000 illusory swords to combine, creating a massive, astonishing greatsword. It did not slash or swipe, but instead... stabbed through the air toward Meng Hao.

As the massive greatsword stabbed toward Meng Hao, he lifted his left hand up, clenched it into a fist, and unleashed the God-Slaying Fist, which slammed into the tip of the sword.

BOOOOMMMMMM!

Starting at the tip, the entire sword shattered. In the blink of an eye, it collapsed into millions of swords images. Blood sprayed out of Hai Dongqing's mouth, and a look of surprise filled his face.

"Too strong!" he thought, heart pounding because of Meng Hao's intense power. From the beginning of the fight to this moment, the pressure in his mind had continued to build until he was shaking. The fear that filled him that was the same type he had experienced when facing Dao-Heaven!

As for Meng Hao, after unleashing his God-Slaying Fist, he threw his head back and roared. His body began to grow, and cracking sounds could be heard as the five swords twisted and then exploded. At the same time, the other four swords which had stabbed into him were ejected out.

He was as powerful as a celestial warrior!

Chapter 1113: Killing Hai Dongqing Three Times!

Yuwen Jian was still sitting behind the shield on the mountain, and as he watched what was happening, he began to pant. By this point, Meng Hao had already made a deep impression on him.

Meng Hao looked up at Hai Dongqing, then coolly said: “And now, it’s your turn!”

His energy erupted, and the healing of his body by his Eternal stratum was plainly visible.

Hai Dongqing’s eyes went wide. He found Meng Hao’s strength to be terrifying, and his heart had long since filled with towering waves of shock. He had personally witnessed Meng Hao slay his two compatriots, using ruthless tactics and lightning-like attacks. The whole thing caused his heart to pound.

“This Meng Hao is too strong! I can’t handle him. Only Dao-Heaven could possibly take him out!” When he realized this, he immediately decided to retreat from the battle. The shadow of death seemed to fill his mind, covering every aspect of his thoughts. Without any further hesitation, and in almost the exact same moment that Meng Hao looked over at him, he turned and fled for his life.

“Think you can just leave?” Meng Hao said. He began to walk forward, and his energy spiked as he unleashed the Seven God Steps. One step. Two steps. Three steps.

With each step he took forward, his killing intent surged. Although he physically looked no different than before, the sky flashed with bright colors, the heavenly bodies trembled, and a huge wind kicked up. To Hai Dongqing, it almost felt like Meng Hao was growing larger with each step, until he was so huge he could hold up the Heavens!

Hai Dongqing’s face fell as he recognized the magic. He had personally been watching on a projection screen when Meng Hao used this art to

defeat Lin Cong.

However, in this critical moment of the battle, Hai Dongqing had no time to flee very far. He quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then pushed his hand down toward the ground. Immediately, his body began to tremble as countless streams of sword qi erupted out of his body. 1,000,000. 5,000,000. All the way to... 10,000,000!

10,000,000 streams of sword qi blotted out the sky, transforming into a tempest that raged across the land toward Meng Hao. It was at this point that Meng Hao took a fourth step, a fifth step, a sixth step... a seventh step!

A massive foot descended from up above, smashing down into Hai Dongqing's sword qi tempest. As it passed through, countless streams of sword qi were shattered and destroyed.

In the blink of an eye, the 10,000,000 streams of sword qi, incapable of standing up to the power of the foot, were crushed. The foot stamped through the air, destroying all resistance as it slammed toward Hai Dongqing.

His eyes went wide from the sensation of deadly crisis. He performed an incantation gesture, causing his body to wither rapidly, with the exception of his hand, which turned translucent and crystalline. Then, he waved his finger toward the foot, his expression one of ferocity and madness.

"Paragon Sky, Daoist Magic Mountain!" he roared. Instantly, a mountain of swords materialized in front of him, emanating shocking ripples as it slammed directly into the descending foot.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!

The mountain of swords trembled beneath the weight of the foot. Cracks spread out, and then the mountain shattered, exploding into countless fragments.

The backlash hit Hai Dongqing, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. He looked at the foot, eyes wide with despair. It descended, unstoppable, destructive, ripping his sword mountain apart and blotting out the sky. It

was a huge shadow that descended onto him with a shocking boom.

It was impossible to stop, and he was incapable of holding it up. It was as if the energy of the will of Heaven were weighing down onto him, and he was nothing more than an ant. A bloodcurdling scream rang out, and he was stamped, crushed, his body exploding into bits of blood and gore that turned into a mist. He was completely killed.

The foot faded away, and the borrowed energy and momentum Meng Hao had also dissipated. However, he didn't relax in the least. As soon as the energy faded, he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the location where Hai Dongqing had exploded.

In the moment that he closed in, the mist of blood rapidly formed back together. In the blink of an eye, a power like that of time reversal could be sensed in the area, and Hai Dongqing once again appeared, a look of astonishment on his face. He immediately bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood, which spread out to form a blood shield. At the same time, he fell back rapidly.

Terror filled his eyes, as well as an overflowing hatred.

"I can't believe I just died! Damn you, Meng Hao, you forced me to waste one of my Echelon lives!!

"I refuse to accept this!" he roared. Despite his posturing, inside, he was shaking with fear, and retreated at top speed. Rumbling filled the air as he instantly fell back by 3,000 meters.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, but didn't seem surprised. After fighting with Han Qinglei and Lin Cong, he had long since come to understand how the soul of an Echelon cultivator couldn't be destroyed. That was the exact reason why he had remained so on guard after killing Hai Dongqing moments ago, and had even continued to advance.

"You don't even deserve to be in the Echelon," Meng Hao said. "I've never truly killed an Echelon cultivator before, and I'm curious to find out if there will be a reward for doing so in the Windswept Realm." With that, he waved his right hand, causing the Blood Demon head to appear. As he shot through the air, wind buffeting his face, he took a deep breath, and

the Blood Demon head slammed into the blood shield, first shattering it into pieces, and then absorbing it.

Meng Hao pierced over the lands like an arrow, passing through the Blood Demon head to appear directly behind the fleeing Hai Dongqing. As he closed in, his killing intent erupted out explosively.

Hai Dongqing's face was ashen, and he let out a shriek as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. His body twitched, and he opened his mouth. Shockingly, a beam of sword light shot out, which instantly transformed into five swords, each one a different color!

The five swords were all illusory, but their sudden appearance on the scene caused Meng Hao's eyes widen.

Hai Dongqing began to chant:

"Liver constitutes wood. The Arrival of Spring!

"Heart constitutes fire. The Eve of Summer!

"Spleen constitutes earth. The Halfway Point!

"Lungs constitute metal. The End of Autumn!

"Kidneys constitute water. The Dead of Winter!"

A vicious expression could be seen on his face as he roared, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused the five sword lights to interlace and transform into a sword formation!

"Five organs and five elements, complementary and correspondent! The ebb of day and night, no beginning and no end!!

"Minor Five Elements Sword Formation!" He spread his hands wide, causing the five sword lights to spin around each other, transforming into a five elements sword formation that rumbled toward Meng Hao.

This was a Heavenly sword magic of Hai Dongqing's that was equal in power to his Paragon magic. In fact, this was a special trump card that he had kept secret from everyone, up to this moment.

Not even Dao-Heaven knew that he had this technique hidden up his

sleeve. In fact, the main reason he had kept it hidden was that he hoped to use it to free himself from Dao-Heaven one day in the future.

After all, no Echelon cultivator would ever willingly become the follower of another Echelon cultivator. Although he pretended not to care about the matter, he cared very much!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as the Minor Five Elements Sword Formation shot through the air toward him. Then, he laughed, and instead of retreating, he pushed forward faster. As he and the five elements sword formation closed in on each other, he suddenly extended his palm out ahead of him.

"Fifth Demon Sealing Hex, Inside Outside Hex!" he said coolly. The Fifth Demon Sealing Hex could break through all sorts of restrictive spells and spell formations, and as soon as he unleashed it, a rift appeared on his palm.

Usually when such a rift appeared, it would consume and absorb. However, this time, it was the opposite. Everything was switched, and as Meng Hao pushed his hand forward, a rumbling sound could be heard. The five elements sword formation began to tremble, and was then shoved backward. It was as if some incredible, invisible power were pushing the sword formation out from the inside, causing it to expand.

Meng Hao appeared in just that moment. As the sword formation was spread out thin, he passed through a gap in the middle of it, shooting forward like lightning to appear in front of Hai Dongqing.

Hai Dongqing was astonished, and could hardly believe what was happening. Just when he seemed to be on the verge of going mad, Meng Hao's right hand snapped out and pressed down onto the top of his head.

Almost in the same moment, though, Meng Hao inexplicably shot backward, not even taking the time to perform an incantation gesture. Hai Dongqing threw his head back and laughed maniacally, and a rumbling sound could be heard coming from inside of him as he chose to self-detonate.

Rather than allow Meng Hao to kill him, he killed himself. A huge boom

could be heard as he exploded, transforming into a tempest that swept out madly in all directions. Meng Hao was shoved backward by the shockwave. However, in the same spot where he had self-detonated, a mist of blood could be seen that once again transformed into Hai Dongqing.

This time, his face was ashen; without the slightest hesitation, he shot backward in retreat.

He was trembling, and the courage he had felt when he self-detonated was now gone. That was because he knew... that this was his last life. The next time he died, he would be completely destroyed in body and soul.

Echelon cultivators had two lives. When he had fought Dao-Heaven, there were special circumstances that led to Han Dongqing choosing to capitulate instead of giving up one of his lives. Were it not for that, he really would have died just now.

Trembling, he went all-out to flee, raising his right hand to slap down onto his chest. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his body withered. At the same time, though, his head grew larger, giving him a bizarre and deformed appearance.

Blue veins even began to pop out all over his face.

“Air Aperture!” he roared. By sacrificing his body, he was able to enlarge his head. At the same time, an explosive influx of divine sense converged on his forehead, where it then spread out to form an invisible, enormous spell formation.

It was a teleportation portal, a bit of good fortune he had obtained years ago and imprinted on his soul. He was now using divine sense to activate it and use it to escape.

This spell formation was unique, and something that could only be used by an Echelon cultivator who had been killed twice. Were it not for that stipulation, he would have used it much earlier.

Ripples from the spell formation spread out in all directions as it prepared to whisk him away.

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. Seeing how hard it was to

actually kill Hai Dongqing gave him a much deeper understanding of what it meant to be in the Echelon. He stepped forward and transformed into a golden roc, bursting toward Hai Dongqing with incredible speed. As the ripples of teleportation spread out, he snorted coldly, extended his hand, and waved a finger toward Hai Dongqing.

“Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!”

The Eighth Hex was the Cultivation-Body Hex, and as soon as it was unleashed, Hai Dongqing’s cultivation base was sealed. With his divine sense locked down, the teleportation portal instantly lost the power that was driving it.

“NO!!” Hai Dongqing screamed in despair.

“This time, you’re really going to die, my first time... really and truly killing an Echelon cultivator!” Meng Hao’s voice echoed out behind him.

Chapter 1114: Thou Shalt Call Me... Dao Fang!

As Meng Hao's voice reached his ears and echoed about, Hai Qingdong felt a hand pat down onto the top of his head....

BOOM!

Hai Qingdong's eyes went wide as the skin on his head ripped and tore. In the blink of an eye, his entire body collapsed into pieces.

In that moment, all traces of Hai Qingdong existing in the world vanished. The teleportation portal winked out.

Having been killed a third time in a row by Meng Hao, he was now truly and utterly dead!

In the moment of his death, as the blood and gore drifted about, his Echelon mark began to glow softly, and then floated toward Meng Hao.

"Can't believe a word that Yuwen Jian says!" he thought. "Earlier he told me that he had killed Hai Qingdong once before. From the look of things, that was complete nonsense!" That notion had occurred to him earlier when he killed Hai Qingdong for the second time. Now, he gave a cold harrumph as he reached out and grabbed the Echelon mark.

The mark instantly fused into Meng Hao, causing an intense, stabbing pain in his forehead. Now a more complicated mark had appeared on his forehead, and if you looked closely, you couldn't tell that there were actually two symbols there. It looked complicated and ornate, as if it had undergone profound transformations.

At the same time, a tremor ran through Meng Hao, and he felt something like an indescribable power flowing out of the mark on his forehead. Simultaneously, his Demon Sealing Hexing Magic spontaneously began to flow, as the legacy of the League of Demon Sealers merged with the aura of the Echelon mark.

When that union occurred, Meng Hao's body shook violently, and a

massive roaring like the destruction of Heaven and Earth filled his mind. It reached out to his soul and caused an invisible beam to fly up into the sky.

Meng Hao looked up into the sky, and realized that he was surrounded by a pillar of light. The light, with Meng Hao in it, shot rapidly upward, breaking through all obstacles, emerging from the Windswept Realm and piercing out into the Heavens.

Without stopping, it rose higher and higher. In the blink of an eye it had pierced through everything to appear... in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

He now hovered at an indescribable height, looking down at nine mountains arranged together. A sun and a moon orbited around them, and there were also nine seas. Furthermore, he was even able to see all of the living things in the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas.

Beyond that, outside of the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas, seemingly attached to the Realm and yet below it, were three land masses.

One of them... was the Windswept Realm!

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he looked from the three lower land masses up to the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas. He could see Planet South Heaven, and his parents, standing atop the Tower of Tang. He wanted to call out in greeting, but no sound came out.

He also saw his sister practicing cultivation in the Emperor Immortal Sect. He saw many familiar faces in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He saw Fatty, Chen Fan, Wang Youcai... and in the Nine Seas God World, he saw Granny Nine and the others sitting cross-legged in meditation as they waited for the Windswept Realm to re-open.

Feeling mentally shaken, he looked over at the Ninth Mountain, and on the very peak, he saw an enormous eye that suddenly turned to stare at him in confusion.

He saw Ke Jiushi sitting in meditation in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. He looked over at Planet East Victory, and saw the clone of the Fang Clan Patriarch.

The clone originally was sitting there like a statue, but then suddenly he

raised his head and peered through the void toward Meng Hao, looking slightly startled.

Meng Hao began to pant as he looked over all of the Nine Mountains and Seas. This was not his first time experiencing such a thing. He remembered something similar happening aboard the ship in the Milky Way Sea. 1

Right now, he couldn't help but think of the deep impression left upon him by the old man on that ship.

As Meng Hao hovered there silently, he couldn't hold back from turning his head to look toward the Fourth Mountain. He began to tremble when he saw... Xu Qing!

Obviously, she had no way of knowing that he could see her. He felt very close to her, and at the same time, oh so far away, which caused his heart to twinge with pain.

She sat cross-legged in a river of stars, with Dharma Protectors meditating close by. She looked exactly as she had before reincarnation, simple and cold.

"Qing'er...." he murmured.

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, a tremor ran through Xu Qing. Her eyelashes fluttered as she opened her eyes. A look of confusion could be seen in her eyes.

Some of the old women sitting next to her immediately approached.

"Mistress, what's wrong?"

Xu Qing didn't respond at first. She just stared out into the void.

Finally, she said, "It was like... someone was calling out to me." Her gaze eventually came to rest... in the direction of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

As Meng Hao gazed at the Fourth Mountain and Sea, deep inside that very mountain, a pair of eyes suddenly focused on him for a moment, then looked away.

Meng Hao could sense it, shifted his gaze, and found himself looking at

a huge statue. An incredible pressure emanated out from the statue, which Meng Hao found completely shocking. It was far, far more powerful than the pressure of any other person he had ever encountered.

Suddenly, an archaic voice projected out from the statue: “Ah, so you’re on a mental journey, Meng Hao, my young friend. There is no need to worry about Xu Qing. I’ve accepted her as a disciple. Young friend... I wish you a safe and sound mental journey.”

After a moment, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed. Then he looked deeply at Xu Qing one more time, before turning his attention back to the Nine Mountains and Seas at large. He saw Patriarch Reliance floating through the starry sky of the Eighth Mountain, humming a little tune, seemingly without a care in the world.

All of a sudden, a tremor ran through him. He had no hair on his body, but if he did, they would all be standing on end.

“Who is it! Who’s spying on me!!” he roared.

“Dammit, it feels like... like that little bastard Meng Hao! AHHHH!!

“The Patriarch has fled all the way here, and y-y-you... you just won’t give up, huh?!?!” After looking around for a moment, he stared off blankly into the void for a while, then suddenly began to laugh heartily.

“Oh,” he roared complacently, “so you’re way over there. Come on, you bastard scoundrel. Come get me if you can!”

Meng Hao snorted coldly, but then suddenly, his eyes went wide. Because of the current state he was in, he suddenly saw something on Patriarch Reliance’s back, in a seemingly ordinary corner of the State of Zhao.

There on Patriarch Reliance’s back, right in the middle of the State of Zhao was... a door!!

That door radiated soft light, and as soon as Meng Hao caught sight of it, his heart seized. There was something very familiar about that door, something like the aura of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

“The legacy of Lord Li!!” Meng Hao’s eyes widened, and his heart began to pound as he realized that apparently, the legacy of Lord Li was actually on Patriarch Reliance’s back!

He had little time to consider the matter as he found himself rising higher up within the pillar of light, flying higher and higher up into the void above the Mountain and Sea Realm.

He brought the trembling of his heart under control as he looked up into the vault of the void, and suddenly, a gleam of anticipation appeared in his eyes. He realized that all of this was most likely happening because of the Echelon. Although he wasn’t sure exactly what was happening, he did know... exactly what the Mountain and Sea Realm was!

“33 Heavens, huh...? According to what I learned from the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, breaking through the 33 Heavens is the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!” His eyes glittered as he began to speed faster and faster. 2

He wasn’t sure how much time passed, but eventually he broke through some sort of barrier and found himself looking at a path!

A path among the stars!

There were 33 Realms on that path, which seemed like 33 layers of successive seals that completely enveloped the Mountain and Sea Realm.

The beam of light took him along the path, and he pierced through one Realm after another. Eventually, he broke through the 33rd Realm, and it seemed like he was just on the verge of being able to see the truth about what was beyond. However, in that exact moment, a beam of golden light glittered in his eyes, until that was all that he could see.

Everything shattered!

A tremor ran through him, and the light around him began to collapse. The stream of his soul that was in the light began to recede, but before it did, a Heaven-rending Earth-crushing voice boomed out.

“Thou shalt call me... Dao Fang!”

Back in the Mountain and Sea Realm, in the Windswept Realm, on the National Aura Mountain of the Seventh Nation, Meng Hao trembled, let out a cry, and then coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. He staggered backward, his face pale white.

The mark on his forehead flickered rapidly, then slowly faded. His Demon Sealing Hexing Magic also faded away.

“What was that golden light?!?!”

“And that voice. Dao Fang. Dao Fang.... Why does that name sound so familiar. Where did I hear it before!?” 3 He began panting, and before he could recall anything more about the name, a brilliant beam of light rose up from the central temple of the Windswept Realm.

It was fully 30,000 meters wide, and it shot up into the sky as if to tear open the Heavens. Indescribable ripples spread out, and once again, that world of mountains and statues opened up.

All eyes were fixed up above, including all of the Echelon cultivators. No matter what they were doing at the moment, everyone felt their hearts pounding as they looked overhead.

The entire battlefield surrounding the central temple went silent, and everyone looked in shock at the unprecedentedly bright pillar of light.

In the world up above there was a mountain hidden in the mists behind all of the other mountains and statues. It was the tallest mountain in that world, and all of a sudden... that mountain crumbled into pieces and then reformed into a statue.

That statue looked like a celestial warrior, shocking to the extreme. As soon as everyone saw the face of the statue, they were astonished to see... Meng Hao!

At the same time, a cold, archaic voice echoed out, seemingly emotionless. It filled the entire Windswept Realm, echoing out through the sky.

“Meng Hao, Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Nation, has killed another Echelon cultivator, a criminal act—”

Before the voice could finish speaking, more words echoed out, although this time, they didn't seem to be completely devoid of emotion like before. Grim ripples spread out, and if you listened closely, you would be able to tell... that the voice actually seemed to be different than the first one!

“The reward... is an Ancient Treasure, Heavenly Champion Immortal Ax!”

*

1. Meng Hao's voyage through the Nine Mountains and Seas happened in chapter 685. For those of you who like to analyze all the details of the story, I recently updated the footnotes in that chapter with some new information.
2. Meng Hao reached his conclusions about the Mountain and Sea Tribulation in chapter 1026.
3. Dao Fang was mentioned twice in the story before, in chapter 731 and chapter 887. In Chinese, it's 道方 dào fāng. Dao is the same as “the Dao” and Fang means “square.” It's also the same Fang as the Fang Clan.

Chapter 1115: Windswept Rebellion!

As soon as the voice echoed out, everything shook. Expressions of shock appeared on the faces of everyone who heard the words. It must be noted that in the Windswept Realm, the rewards given were always related to qi flow. Never before had a magical item been bestowed as a reward.

Especially not a magical item that was an Ancient treasure!!

Ancient treasures were magical items for use in the Ancient Realm. Although such objects were more common than Dao Realm treasures, they were still considered very rare. For example, as the crown Prince of the Fang Clan, Meng Hao had an Ancient treasure in the form of a jade pendant, which he could use to confirm his identity.

However, it was definitely a rare thing to encounter an Ancient treasure.

Therefore, when the words regarding a reward in the form of an Ancient treasure echoed out through the Windswept Realm, everyone who heard it was astonished. That was especially true of the Echelon cultivators, whose eyes were wide with disbelief.

After all, this entire trial by fire was focused on the Echelon, not for the purpose of them being killed, but for them to improve and develop via struggle and conflict.

Of course, it wasn't impossible for one of them to accidentally be killed. However, the fact that Echelon cultivators had multiple lives revealed the truth of the matter.

Paragon Sea Dream did not wish for members of the Echelon to be permanently killed!

Fighting was hard to avoid, of course, and naturally, deadly situations would arise. However, the reason she gave multiple lives to the Echelon cultivators was for the express purpose of ensuring that they were not conclusively slaughtered in body and soul.

The Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven, was aware of that, and as such, when he fought people, he didn't go all out with

deadly intent. Instead, he attempted to destroy his rivals in spirit.

He was well aware that Paragon Sea Dream didn't approve of actually killing other Echelon cultivators. Therefore, he wouldn't attempt to do so unless it benefited him directly, or he truly detested that person.

"The Windswept Realm seems different from the descriptions of past instances in the sect records...." Dao-Heaven murmured. He was currently in the Fourth Nation, looking up into the sky.

"So it was Dongqing who died, huh. Killed by Meng Hao.... This time, there are actually prizes for killing Echelon cultivators!

"Kill one, and be rewarded with an Ancient treasure. I wonder what the reward would be for killing two or three, or even... all of them? A Dao treasure?!" When that final sentence came out of his mouth, he began to pant, and his eyes filled with the glow of greed. Killing intent swirling around him, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

"Things are different this time and... I love it!" A murderous aura erupted out of him that had apparently been kept restrained for a very long time. Now that he could unleash it, he turned and headed off into the distance, bursting with killing intent.

Other Echelon cultivators watched the scene play out with flickering expressions. Ambition rose up in their hearts, but at the same time, sensations of deadly crisis arose as well. All of them began to pant.

The only exception was the middle-aged man who sat on the National Aura Mountain in the Third Nation. He smiled slightly.

"The time has come for things to begin. Unexpectedly, Meng Hao gained a bit of an advantage. However, he won't be able to escape the coming calamity."

As the other members of the Echelon, and the rest of the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, stood there in shock, something happened outside in the Mountain and Sea Realm. In the Ruins of Immortality was an Immortal's cave, where a white-robed woman sat cross-legged in meditation. Next to her was Li Ling'er, who also meditated

cross-legged.

All of a sudden, the white-robed woman opened her eyes, and they glowed with a murderous light.

“Imperial Lord of the Windswept Realm, how dare you!!”

As soon as the words left her mouth, her expression flickered.

In the Nine Seas God Worlds in the various Nine Seas, massive rumbling sounds like explosions could be heard. It sounded like some massive structure was collapsing, and the sound sent massive waves surging out across the Seas.

The sounds echoing out through the God Worlds provoked instant reactions from all of the Dao Realm experts, who were currently waiting patiently for the Windswept Realm to reopen.

“What’s happening? This... this....”

“I’m suddenly unable to sense the Windswept Realm!!”

“Not good!!”

Numerous cries of alarm rose up from the various God Worlds. The Nine Seas God World in the Ninth Sea was no exception. Granny Nine and the other Dao Realm Experts, including Godmaster and the two Demonic Cultivator Horde Patriarchs, all began to tremble. Finally, they couldn’t endure any longer, and blood sprayed out of their mouths.

As their eyes went wide, the pillars of light stretching up into the sky shattered, and their connection to Windswept Realm was broken.

“Impossible!!” Godmaster’s face fell. He shot to his feet and looked up into the sky. “The Windswept Realm... has been struck by some massive upheaval!! Dammit! Our connection to it was actually severed!!”

Meanwhile, out in the vast darkness of the void surrounding the Mountain and Sea Realm, the vast lands of the Windswept Realm trembled slightly. A sound like cracking or shattering echoed out as the previous orbit of the entire Realm was suddenly changed, and it began to float up toward the 33 Heavens up above. Of course, nobody in the Realm

itself could sense that!

Paragon Sea Dream jumped to her feet, a murderous aura swirling around her. “Imperial Lord of the Windswept Realm, are you looking to die!?”

She waved her right hand, and her Immortal’s cave suddenly faded away. When it reappeared, shockingly, it was in the void of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Then, only after-images were left behind as it shot out of the Mountain and Sea Realm and toward the lands of the Windswept Realm.

The Echelon cultivators in the Windswept Realm were all shaken. Meng Hao’s face flickered as he saw a rift suddenly open up in the sky above. A black beam shot out, within which was a shocking battle-ax!

The battle-ax emanated a boundless killing aura, and was surrounded by swirling images of vengeful spirits, who emanated soundless shrieks. Apparently, they were bound to the battle-ax, and were incapable of leaving it to enter the cycle of reincarnation.

A shocking pressure erupted from the battle-ax, and as it descended, the lands quaked, and bright colors flashed in the sky.

This was the Ancient treasure, an item that would be considered of extremely high quality even among other Ancient treasures!

Heavenly Champion Immortal Ax!

It floated down slowly to hover in front of Meng Hao, where it emanated a slight droning sound. Meng Hao’s eyes went wide, and his throat went dry as he stared at the pitch-black ax. Finally, he took a deep breath, reached out, and grabbed it.

The instant his hand closed around the haft, an explosive power surged through him. He trembled, and his hair flew up around him. He then flew up into the air, his cultivation base surging.

He swung the ax, and a black beam of light shot out of it, slamming into the ground and cutting out a huge 9,000-meter long gash. The Seventh Nation’s National Aura Mountain was right in the middle of that gash, and was cut directly into two pieces!

Its already weakened shield was completely incapable of standing up to such power, which clearly showed... how terrifyingly powerful the ax was!

Meng Hao's heart trembled as he sensed the incredible energy inside the battle-ax.

Yuwen Jian still sat on top of the National Aura Mountain, which had just been cut into two halves. His scalp began to tingle as he stared at the two cliffs formed by the blow. He felt like his head was about to explode, and a powerful sensation of deadly crisis rose up in him.

Several moments passed before the resulting windstorm died down. Meng Hao waved his hand, and the battle-ax disappeared. A strange light appeared in his eyes as began to think about the circumstances in which he was rewarded with the ax.

"There were two voices just now, not one!" he thought. "The first voice was the same as the voices from before. It was cold and emotionless, presumably because it was following orders. That must be the result of the natural laws imposed on the Windswept Realm by the Mountain and Sea Realm!"

"I killed an Echelon cultivator, and according to the first voice, that was some sort of criminal act. However... a moment later a second voice spoke, and actually rewarded me with a treasure!"

"Is someone encouraging us Echelon cultivators to wipe each other out?" Meng Hao's heart trembled. If his speculations were correct, then this turn of events surely had some connection to the way Jian Daozi and the others had looked at them when they first arrived in Mountain and Sea Realm, as well as the little tricks Jian Daozi had tried to pull off. Furthermore, Meng Hao had heard the others mention that the Windswept Realm was different this time than it had been before. He suddenly gasped.

"Could it be that some great catastrophe is about to strike in the Windswept Realm?" he thought.

His face darkened. At the same time, Yuwen Jian finally gained enlightenment of the 300th Essence from the World Seals. He then leapt to his feet and shouted at Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao, y-y-you... you just about cut me in half with that ax!”

His voice echoed out like thunder, interrupting Meng Hao’s train of thought.

Meng Hao looked down at Yuwen Jian and, voice cool, said, “My hand slipped, that was all. By the way, congratulations on achieving enlightenment. Oh, another thing. Didn’t you mention something about having killed Hai Dongqing once before?”

“I said that?” Yuwen Jian responded, sounding a bit guilty. However, he instantly slipped back into a rage. “Look, that’s not even important. You just about chopped me in two just now! Did you hear me? It was THIS close!! I didn’t do anything to provoke you! Your hand slipped? I almost lost my life! I’ve cowed the entire Seventh Mountain, fool! I’ve traversed mountains of daggers and seas of flames without getting killed, then I almost get killed because your hand slipped? You owe me for this....”

Meng Hao wasn’t really paying attention. “Sea of flames,” he thought. “Sea of flames.... I remember! Dao Fang! Beneath the Ancient Dao Lakes in the lands of South Heaven, the final level of the trial by fire overseen by those strange beasts, was the world of the Essence of Divine Flame....

“There was an eye of flame there which yelled something that included the name Dao Fang!!” Meng Hao’s mind trembled as he finally recalled the information he was looking for.

Instantly, his eyes widened, and a bright, intimidating gleam appeared in them.

Of course, from Yuwen Jian’s perspective, he had just said a few words, only to have Meng Hao suddenly fall silent and then stare at him threateningly. He began to tremble, and he remembered how strong Meng Hao had been when he had killed the two cultivators moments ago. Then he had ruthlessly cut down Hai Dongqing.

He also thought about how terrifying that ax was, and then Yuwen Jian’s face twitched with the realization of how impulsive it had been to berate Meng Hao the way he had. Meng Hao was clearly a jinx should never be provoked. A bead of cold sweat dripped down Yuwen Jian’s temple, and a

wide smile broke out on his face. He quickly clasped hands and bowed several times.

“Hahaha! Brother Meng Hao, let’s let bygones be bygones,” he said cheerily. “I was just kidding around, brother. Even if you do chop, er, chop me in two, well... no problem. I have lives left, so if you do kill me, I’ll come back.” Then he laughed heartily.

Chapter 1116: A Meeting in the Sixth Nation!

“Dao Fang...” he thought. “Once I leave the Windswept Realm and get back home, I’m definitely going to go back to the Ancient Dao Lakes!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered thoughtfully, and then the intimidating gleam in his eyes vanished. He looked back down at Yuwen Jian and smiled enigmatically.

How could he not have realized that Yuwen Jian could have reached enlightenment much earlier, and had intentionally dragged things out? Clearly, he had been planning something. Although Meng Hao’s use of the ax had seemed completely spontaneous, it was actually designed as a warning for Yuwen Jian.

Seeing Meng Hao’s smile, Yuwen Jian felt even guiltier. Clearing his throat, he smacked his chest heroically and said, “Brother Meng Hao, you are truly courageous and extraordinary. Hahaha. Dao-Heaven’s three hired thugs were all incredibly powerful. But in front of you, they were like hired clowns. You crushed them like weeds! You’re definitely destined to be number one in the Mountain and Sea Realm Echelon!” Although Yuwen Jian’s words were blatantly ingratiating, his expression was very sincere, as if every word were spoken from the depths of his heart. 1

“Well said, well said,” replied Meng Hao, chuckling. Then he stared evenly at Yuwen Jian. “However, Fellow Daoist Yuwen Jian, you still need to return the World Seal I loaned to you.”

Yuwen Jian’s smile stiffened, and his mind spun with hundreds of ideas. However, when he saw the look in Meng Hao’s eyes, his heart began to pound, and he once again thought about the implications of Meng Hao being rewarded for killing an Echelon cultivator.

“Dammit!” he thought. “The rewards of the Windswept Realm this time are encouraging us to slaughter each other.... I can’t provoke this jinx, otherwise I’ll find myself in a deadly crisis!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Yuwen Jian unhesitatingly produced the World Seal

and sent it back to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao grabbed it and put it away. Smiling just as broadly as ever, he didn't say a single word about the Seventh Nation's World Seal. Yuwen Jian had intentionally sat out of the fight, and had been plotting the whole time. Had he instead joined in to fight Hai Qingdong and the others, then Meng Hao would naturally have refrained from greedily keeping the World Seal.

However, since Yuwen Jian had clearly been up to something, then Meng Hao didn't feel guilty at all about turning the tables on him.

Yuwen Jian smiled wryly. Although he was a body cultivator, the fact that he was not only a member of the Echelon, but had also managed to keep his place in it for so long, and at the same time managed to reach such a high level of body cultivation, showed that he was no fool. He might not be considered a genius, he was quite adept at scheming.

It was obvious to even him that Meng Hao had seen through his plan, and had used the ax as a warning. Not returning the Seventh Nation's World Seal was an additional punishment.

"Well, that's fine," he thought. "Since the Windswept Realm seems to be encouraging us Echelon cultivators to wipe each other out, then those World Seals are like signal flares. The more you have, the more likely you'll be to get killed and have them stolen away. Since I have no World Seal, as long as I'm careful, I'll actually be much safer."

Yuwen Jian was now feeling a lot more confident, so he clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao. Backing up a few steps at the same time, he smiled and said, "Brother Meng Hao, it's getting late. My place is kind of a mess right now, so I won't keep you any longer. Take care of yourself on your way back, brother, and when you get a chance come visit again."

Meng Hao looked at him, and Yuwen Jian instantly braced himself for something bad to happen. After a moment, though, Meng Hao merely smiled, swished his sleeve, and turned to depart.

It was in this moment, however, that a beam of light suddenly rose up from the central temple. It was rapidly expanding, spreading out to fill the

entire Windswept Realm.

Shockingly, this light was just like the light from moments before... it was 30,000 meters wide!!

The massive pillar of light shot up into the Heavens, causing non-stop rumbling sounds to echo out. The sky shook, and countless ripples expanded out, filling the entire sky. Meng Hao's eyes went wide, and Yuwen Jian's face fell.

As the beam of light burst up into the world of mountains and statues, the tallest of the mountains, the one which was now a statue of Meng Hao, suddenly blurred as a ghost image appeared next to it. The image then solidified into a second statue!

That second statue depicted a young man with swirling killing intent. He emanated incredible pressure that caused Meng Hao to pant. Shockingly, that statue was holding a head in its hand!

That head radiated icy coldness, despite being dead.

"Dao-Heaven!!" Yuwen Jian exclaimed. "That's the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain!! The head in his hand... is the head of the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain!!" His face drained of blood. He well knew that Dao-Heaven had long since taken the Second Nation's World Seal from that cultivator, who had then managed to flee.

He had previously reached the conclusion that lacking a World Seal would place him in much less danger. He had never imagined that after only a few breaths of time passed, his entire line of reasoning would be overturned. The Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain was now dead, heralding the beginning of what would no doubt be a series of bloody and chaotic battles!

It didn't matter whether or not he had a World Seal, he was still in incredible danger!

Next, that cold and ruthless voice echoed out through the Windswept Realm.

"The reward... is an Ancient treasure! Lofty Mountain Immortal Flail!"

All of the Echelon cultivators were instantly shaken. Events were unfolding too quickly. First Hai Qingdong was killed, and then moments later, Dao-Heaven hunted down and killed someone else!

Furthermore, the reward was another Ancient treasure!

Meng Hao stared at the world up above, and Dao-Heaven's statue. His eyes then began to gleam with an intimidating light. Even though he wasn't sure how strong this Dao-Heaven was compared to Hai Qingdong, from what he could sense, he was incredibly powerful.

"Dao-Heaven...." he thought, eyes glittering.

Just when he was about to leave, Yuwen Jian suddenly flew up into the air and cried out, "Brother Meng Hao! Hahaha! Look, it's getting pretty late, there's no need to hurry off. Why don't you stick around for a few days!?"

Yuwen Jian was scared, so how could he possibly allow Meng Hao to leave so easily? If Meng Hao stayed behind, then there would be two of them to fight against Dao-Heaven if he came looking for them.

Meng Hao ignored him and was just about to speed off into the distance when Yuwen Jian, thoughts racing, clenched his teeth and then blurted, "Meng Hao, I know of a way for you to get the Sixth Nation's World Seal without even lifting your pinky finger!"

Meng Hao stopped and looked back at Yuwen Jian.

Seeing that Meng Hao had stopped, Yuwen Jian quickly explained, "Listen, Meng Hao. Of the nine World Seals, Dao-Heaven now has three, and you have four. The remaining two are those belonging to the Third Nation and the Sixth Nation respectively. The Echelon cultivator in the Sixth Nation is that kid Hong Bin. We went through some dangerous situations together and became friends. How about I take you to the Sixth Nation and persuade him to give you the World Seal! 2" he declared, slapping his chest.

"That way, you'll have five World Seals, and will definitely have the upper hand!"

“As long as you’re not scared of Dao-Heaven, then the Sixth Nation’s World Seal is yours!”

Meng Hao stared at him coldly. He didn’t trust Yuwen Jian very much; although they hadn’t known each other for long, he got the feeling that Yuwen Jian was about as unreliable as Patriarch Reliance.

“I don’t trust you,” Meng Hao said slowly.

Looking insulted and a bit angry, Yuwen Jian said, “Brother Meng Hao, it really hurts me to hear you say that. You know what type of person I am? I’m just like the ‘jian 坚’ character in my name. I’m steadfast in conduct, steadfast in word, steadfast in action, steadfast in everything!”

Unmoved, Meng Hao coolly responded, “You told me that you killed Hai Qingdong once.”

Yuwen Jian didn’t seem the least bit embarrassed about that fact. Laughing heartily, he said, “Brother Meng Hao, I’ve been wanting to reform some of my bad habits for a while now. I really managed to make myself look like a fool in front of you, brother. I’m definitely going to make some changes!”

“Your enlightenment earlier went way too slowly,” Meng Hao said.

“Hahaha! Brother Meng Hao, there’s no need to go out of your way to give me face. I wasn’t slow, I was just distracted. For that, I must apologize. From now on, I definitely won’t daydream anymore!”

Meng Hao wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. He looked closely at Yuwen Jian for a moment, and realized that not only were his words unreliable, but he was also extremely shameless. In terms of doing about-faces, nobody else could possibly match up to him.

Yuwen Jian’s expression was extremely sincere. Smacking his chest, he declared, “Brother Meng Hao, this time, you just have to trust me. I really am friends with Hong Bin. I saved his life once!”

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao looked at Yuwen Jian and calmly said, “If you don’t get me that World Seal, then you’ll see what happens when I really flip out.”

It was no threat. His calm words instantly caused Yuwen Jian to become nervous, and he nodded.

No more words were exchanged. Yuwen Jian led the way, and the two of them became bright beams of light that shot through the Seventh Nation toward the Sixth Nation. They moved with incredible speed, so it wasn't long before they arrived.

As soon as they entered the Sixth Nation, intense pressure weighed down on them, a warning of sorts. The boy Hong Bin, currently sat cross-legged on the Sixth Nation's National Aura Mountain, and as soon as he sensed them, his face flickered. The National Aura Mountain's shield sprang up, and Hong Bin was immediately surrounded by several followers, who formed a defensive spell formation.

"Dammit," he said out loud. "Is it Dao-Heaven? Or is it just someone passing through? Either way, keep the spell formation ready. If it's Dao-Heaven, we can teleport out of here!" Hong Bin was extremely nervous. Currently, the two people he feared most were Dao-Heaven and Meng Hao.

Both of them had killed other Echelon cultivators, and had been rewarded with Ancient treasures. How could he not be afraid? He didn't want his own life to be the price paid to get either one of them another Ancient treasure.

As he sat there vigilantly, two streaks of light pierced through the air outside of the National Aura Mountain. Yuwen Jian was in the lead position, and as soon as he got close enough, he urgently shouted, "Hong Bin, old pal, it's Yuwen Jian, come to pay respects!"

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, Hong Bin caught sight of Yuwen Jian. Instantly, his eyes blazed with anger, and he shot to his feet.

"Dammit, Yuwen Jian, you duplicitous bastard! You conned me back then and I never hunted you down about it, but now you have the gall to come looking for me!?"

"Hey, who's that behind you? That's... dammit! I can't believe you brought him here! I won't rest until you're dead, Yuwen Jian!!"

As soon as Hong Bin's shrill voice echoed out, Yuwen Jian glanced embarrassedly over at Meng Hao. What he saw was Meng Hao looking back at him with an icy smile.

"Brother Meng Hao," he gushed, "just give me the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Don't worry, I'll definitely succeed!" In a flash, he sped toward the National Aura Mountain!

*

1. There is some word play in this passage that doesn't quite translate well. Literally he says, "those three dog-legs (hired thugs/henchmen) of Dao-Heaven were all powerful, but to you they were like dirt-dogs (stray dogs/mole crickets)".
2. Hong Bin's name in Chinese is 洪斌 hóng bīn. Hong is a surname which also means "great" or "big." Bin means "refined".

Chapter 1117: He's Here!

On the Sixth Nation's National Aura Mountain, the boy Hong Bin sat grim-faced, surrounded by nine followers. His teleportation portal was ready to be used at a moment's notice. All it required was a bit of divine will, and then he would be teleported away.

He held the World Seal of the Sixth Nation tightly in his hand as he stared coldly at Yuwen Jian. However, he did not teleport away.

Yuwen Jian hurried over until he was right outside the National Aura Mountain's shield. Of course, without Hong Bin's permission to enter, all he could do was hover outside and smile wryly.

"Brother Hong Bin... listen--"

"Beat it! Whoever you call brother gets struck with bad luck!" Hong Bin had a very unsightly look on his face. He glanced over at Meng Hao off in the distance, eyes wide. Originally, he hadn't thought much at all about this latest addition to the Echelon. However, Meng Hao's display of power in the Windswept Realm completely swept away any cavalier attitudes toward him harbored by the other Echelon cultivators.

He had defeated Han Qinglei, routed Lin Cong, and had then gone on to slaughter another Echelon cultivator.

Such achievements in battle ensured that he rose to prominence like a blazing sun, and was a person that no one would take lightly.

Hong Bin gritted his teeth and said, "I'll let you say three more things, and after that you'd better get the hell back to wherever you came from, otherwise, I'm outta here!"

"Outta here? To where?" Yuwen Jian shouted, looking righteously at Hong Bin. "It's not like you can leave the Windswept Realm! No matter where you run to, if Dao-Heaven thinks it's worth it to track you down, do you really think he'll let you get away?"

Hong Bin grimaced. He was also aware that fleeing was not a good long-term option. However, there was really no other choice. Dao-Heaven was

simply too powerful.

“You can say two more things!” Hong Bin said, his face grim.

“You’re powerless to defend yourself,” Yuwen Jian continued, “and so am I, all because of this damned Windswept Realm and the changes to the rules. Don’t try to convince me that you haven’t noticed the writing on the wall. Furthermore, don’t try to get me to believe that you don’t know why I brought Meng Hao here. Cooperation could be doubly beneficial for all of us, whereas splitting up would be doubly detrimental!”

“You can say one more thing!” Hong Bin said slowly, placing his right hand on the ground, which caused the teleportation portal to rev up. All the while, he stared at Yuwen Jian.

“Fudge! I didn’t have three things to say, fool!” Yuwen Jian roared. “If you want to chicken out, then get the hell out of here!”

Hong Bin stared in shock, and his expression grew even more unsightly. He shifted his gaze over to Meng Hao off in the distance, then gritted his teeth after a long moment.

“Can he beat Dao-Heaven?”

“Maybe, maybe not,” Yuwen Jian said bitterly. “Even if you join the two of us, we still might not be able to beat him.... But, this is the only way we’ll even have a chance. The alternative is just waiting for Dao-Heaven to slaughter us all one by one!”

Hong Bin replied with silence. If Yuwen Jian had said that he was sure they could beat Dao-Heaven, Hong Bin would have teleported away immediately. Generally speaking, he didn’t trust anything Yuwen Jian said. However, for Yuwen Jian to unexpectedly respond in this way caused Hong Bin to hesitate.

“What does he want in exchange for my help!?” Hong Bin asked, looking at Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian looked back silently at Hong Bin for a moment before replying, “Do you really need to ask?” After another moment, he continued, “Fellow Daoist Hong Bin, I might have conned you in the past,

but you have to admit that when I did, I didn't hurt you in any way!"

Hong Bin clenched his jaw, then waved his right hand. The Sixth Nation's World Seal flew out, piercing through the shield and flying past Yuwen Jian toward Meng Hao.

If he was going to purchase a favor, it would be better to have Meng Hao owe him, than Yuwen Jian.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he reached out toward the incoming World Seal.

"Fellow Daoist Meng Hao," Hong Bin said, one word at a time. "I'm not sure what this shyster Yuwen Jian told you, but since this is our first time meeting, I want to make something clear.... Dao-Heaven has started killing people, and I don't want to end up a victim. Neither does Yuwen Jian. As for you... if you want to fight Dao-Heaven, you'll need our help!"

"At the very least, you'll need us up until Dao-Heaven is dead!"

Meng Hao caught the World Seal. After a moment of silence, he nodded. "You're right," he said slowly. "So. Are you guys ready?"

Such a response from Meng Hao caught Hong Bin off guard. He had assumed Meng Hao would make some sort of confident declaration, but instead, he had responded complete contrary to expectation. Yuwen Jian's eyes also went wide. He and Hong Bin looked at each other, and then expressions of determination filled their faces.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, you're very frank and straightforward," said Hong Bin. "I don't need to prepare anything. I'm ready to fight right now!" With that, he rose to his feet, his cultivation base surging. His energy soared, and a massive wind sprang up into the sky.

Yuwen Jian's eyes gleamed with resolve, and his cultivation base also erupted with power. A second tempest roared up into the sky, joining with Hong Bin's to shake everything. The shocking power caused the lands to tremble and the air to distort. They were like two burning torches in the dead of night, making a declaration to every other Echelon cultivator, even to Dao-Heaven, that they... wanted to fight!!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He put away the Sixth Nation's World Seal and then also unleashed his power. Massive rumbling could be heard as his energy quickly surpassed Yuwen Jian and Hong Bin's, causing everything to shake violently.

These were three Echelon cultivators, simultaneously powering up, creating a will to fight that shook everything, issuing a direct challenge to Dao-Heaven!

This was no plot, scheme, or trick. This was an open and aboveboard declaration of war!

The mortals in the Windswept Realm didn't notice anything more than a sudden increase in the air pressure. However, the cultivators could detect the shocking transformations, the trembling of the lands and the chaos up in the sky.

As for the raging will to fight cast off by Meng Hao, Yuwen Jian and Hong Bin... only other Echelon cultivators could detect it.

Han Qinglei and Lin Cong were no longer in their original nations; both were hiding in random places in the Windswept Realm. In one particular mountain cave, Han Qinglei suddenly looked in the direction of the Sixth Nation, and his face flickered.

Lin Cong was sitting cross-legged at the bottom of a lake. When the lake water began to vibrate, he suddenly looked up, and his eyes flashed.

In the Fourth Nation, Dao-Heaven was flying at top speed through the air when all of a sudden, he stopped in midflight and looked in the direction of the Sixth Nation. A bright gleam appeared in his eyes, and a faint smile turned up the corners of his mouth. He could sense the will to fight in those three bursts of energy, and could tell that they were issuing a challenge to him.

"You want to fight? Well then, let's fight!" he said proudly. Then, he exploded with massive speed, transforming into a Blue Dragon that roared off into the distance.

The roaring shook Heaven and Earth, causing a massive wind to kick up,

and the sky to move backward. When compared to the energy of Meng Hao and the others, his energy was actually slightly greater!

At the same time, he pushed himself with greater speed, piercing through the air and leaving behind only afterimages as he shot toward the Sixth Nation with indescribable speed.

Outside of the Sixth Nation's National Aura Mountain, almost as soon as Meng Hao and the others unleashed their energy, they felt the response from Dao-Heaven. Yuwen Jian's face darkened.

"Dammit. He's even stronger than before!!"

Meng Hao's eyes went wide. He had never met Dao-Heaven from the First Mountain, but had heard his name mentioned by other Echelon cultivators. He knew that Dao-Heaven was strong, and that, thirty years ago, he had earned the title of number one in the Echelon.

In the subsequent thirty years, other Echelon cultivators would have had the chance to catch up, putting them in the position to fight him. From the way things were playing out in the Windswept Realm, though, it seemed that Dao-Heaven... was still the number one most powerful member.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes flickered with the intense desire to fight.

Inside the National Aura Mountain's shield, Hong Bin felt his heart beginning to pound, and he started grumbling inwardly. Now that Dao-Heaven had revealed his energy, the bravery he had felt moments ago was waning.

After a moment, though, his eyes flickered, and he said, "I'm adept with Daoist magic. I'll stay here behind the shield where I'm safe, and use magical techniques on Dao-Heaven. That is how I can support you, Elder Brother Meng and Elder Brother Yuwen."

Yuwen Jian hesitated for a moment, then gritted his teeth. Determination shone in his eyes, and it looked like he was ready to throw caution to the wind.

“I’m a body cultivator, and I have my Six Times Nine God Body,” he said. “Brother Meng Hao, you might be the most powerful fighter among us, but you’ve never tangled with Dao-Heaven. Let me take the lead in the battle. I’ll buy you some time to analyze him.”

Yuwen Jian’s sudden statement caused Hong Bin to stare in shock. Yuwen Jian was the type of person who seemed honest, but was actually very treacherous, so Hong Bin would never have guessed that he would choose to do as he just had.

Meng Hao also looked at Yuwen Jian with a strange expression. After a moment of thought, he nodded. “Very well. It will help to have some time to study him.”

The three of them spoke no more words. They sat down cross-legged, Yuwen Jian and Meng Hao in midair outside of the shield, Hong Bin inside. All three remained in their peak states as they waited for Dao-Heaven’s arrival. Eventually, Yuwen Jian took out a bottle of medicinal pills and quietly consumed one. Rumbling sounds emanated out from inside of him, and he began to shine with a red glow.

“God blood?” Meng Hao asked suddenly.

“My last drop,” Yuwen Jian replied, crushing the bottle to show that it really was the last drop inside.

“How did you get it?” Meng Hao asked.

“By killing a God!” was the cool response. “Brother Meng Hao, if you’re interested, then as long as I don’t die in this fight, I’ll take you to the Seventh Mountain one day. We can take a trip to the God Domain and slay some Gods!”

Meng Hao nodded. “Deal!”

Time passed. Soon, Dao-Heaven was shooting over the sky of the Fifth Nation, causing rumbling sounds to emanate out. The ground quaked, and rifts tore open in the sky.

All of a sudden, a crimson chain appeared, wrapped around Dao-Heaven’s arm, which emanated the aura of an Ancient treasure. That was

none other than his reward for killing the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain. Lofty Mountain Immortal Flail!

Gradually, what appeared to be images of lofty mountains appeared on the surface of the chain. Occasionally, even Immortal mountains could be seen!

Dao-Heaven shot through the Fifth Nation, face both icy and also filled with pride and self-confidence. Eventually, he reached... the Sixth Nation.

As soon as he passed over the border, incredible pressure weighed down on him.

Back on the Sixth Nation's National Aura Mountain, Hong Bin suddenly said: "He's here!!"

Yuwen Jian's eyes began to shine, and he rose to his feet, looking more serious than ever.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked off into the distance. In that direction, he sensed a Heaven-shaking, Earth shattering power of qi and blood, rumbling in his direction!

Chapter 1118: Fighting Dao-Heaven!

Dao-Heaven had arrived!

The sky churned and the lands shook. It was as if the king of all the Heavens had arrived. As soon as he set foot onto the lands below, a seemingly invincible energy radiated out with each step he took.

Every step caused the land to quake, and huge footprints to appear in the ground. It was as if an invisible giant were treading forth.

Dao-heaven wore a long white robe, and had flowing black hair. He was handsome, seemingly having cast off all traces of mortality. His eyes shone like stars, and anyone who looked into them would feel as if they were being sucked into their depths.

Thirty years ago... he had been named... the number one cultivator in the Echelon, its most powerful member.

He did not wear a crown, and yet anyone who looked at him would find him kingly. He wore no Imperial robes, only a white garment, and yet he appeared to represent the Heavens.

He strolled along, seemingly in no hurry, and yet filled with icy coldness. The way he looked down at Meng Hao and the others made it seem as if they were ants to him. Apparently it was only Meng Hao himself whom he seemed to find even the least bit interesting.

“So, the three of you want to challenge me to a fight?” he said coldly as he hovered in midair. His simple statement echoed out like thunder, tearing through all obstacles to pound into the ears of Meng Hao, Yuwen Jian and Hong Bin.

Yuwen Jian’s face went pale, and he trembled as he took a few steps backward. Then he threw his head back and howled, “Dao-Heaven!!”

Roaring, he suddenly shot up into the air.

Hong Bin sat behind the shield, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, a look of astonishment and fear written on his face. He had never imagined that a single statement uttered by Dao-Heaven could injure him

so badly. It was almost as if the shield behind which he sat was useless.

Seeing that Yuwen Jian was going on the offensive, Hong Bing gritted his teeth and performed an incantation gesture. Then he waved his finger toward Dao-Heaven, causing numerous stars to materialize up above.

The stars flickered, and then smashed toward Dao-Heaven.

In addition, multitudinous complex lines spread out around Dao-Heaven, forming spinning spell formations that seemed designed to entangle and kill him.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Although Dao-Heaven's words didn't affect him very much, now that he was face to face with the young man, he could sense an incredible might emanating off of him. That might was the incredible battle prowess of Dao-Heaven's shocking cultivation base.

"Of all the people I've encountered in my generation, he's definitely the strongest!" he thought, his eyes flickering. He stepped forward, unleashing the Seven God Steps, which caused his energy to begin to rise up.

It takes a bit of time to describe all of these things, but they all happened in almost an instant. Dao-Heaven smiled indifferently, as if he didn't even care about his three opponents.

"None of you even deserve to be in the Echelon," he said, waving his right hand through the air. Instantly, the air seemed to rip apart and then spin toward the incoming stars. Before the stars could even get close to Dao-Heaven, they were shattered into pieces.

Next, Dao-Heaven raised his right foot up and stamped it down. A boom echoed out, followed by a shockwave that spread out with astonishing attack power. As soon as it touched the spell formations, cracking sounds could be heard, and the delicate spell formations were destroyed.

After taking that single step, Dao-Heaven pushed his right finger toward the incoming Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian threw his head back and roared. "Six Times Nine God Body! Ninth Transformation!"

Rumbling sounds could be heard as his body rapidly grew larger, until he looked like a giant. Incredible power radiated off of him as he sent two fists flying toward Dao-Heaven. In the blink of an eye, his fists connected with Dao-Heaven's finger.

In that instant, the flesh was shredded off of his hands, revealing the bones underneath. Yuwen Jian let out a miserable shriek as he tumbled backward, blood spraying everywhere. Shockingly, his two fists couldn't stand up to the swipe of Dao-Heaven's single finger!!

Meng Hao was shaken inwardly. He had fought Yuwen Jian, and knew that in his current state, even he would be incapable of seriously injuring Yuwen Jian with a single finger swipe.

"Impossible!" Yuwen Jian howled. "Y-you... how many times have you dropped your cultivation base back down from the Ancient Realm?!?!" It was a huge blow to him to have been seriously injured by a single finger swipe.

"Insects like you shouldn't talk about things they don't understand." Dao-Heaven said coolly, taking another step forward, instantly bypassing Meng Hao. It was almost like a teleportation, which placed him very close to the Sixth Nation's National Aura Mountain shield.

"Yuwen Jian," Dao-Heaven said loftily, "you don't deserve to be in the Echelon. And you... Hong Bin, you deserve it even less." He waved his finger toward the shield, causing a sun and a moon to appear. They swirled around each other as they sped through the air and then smashed into the shield.

A vicious expression appeared on Hong Bin's face. He performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing numerous streams of light to explode up. 10,000,000 of them spread out, creating a bright river that surged toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's expression was as lofty as ever as his finger touched the shield. A boom rang out, and the shield trembled, distorting even more violently than before. Instantly, cracks spread out from the point where his finger had touched it!

“Break,” he said. The cracks expanded rapidly, and in the blink of an eye, the entire shield suddenly shattered. At the same time, Hong Bin’s river of 10,000,000 streams of light rumbled toward Dao-Heaven with shocking power.

At the same time, Hong Bin’s face went pale, and an expression of fear appeared. Without any further hesitation, he slapped his hand onto the ground, causing the teleportation portal to surge into motion. Blood sprayed out of the mouths of his nine followers as they used their life force to power the portal.

“That’s all you’ve got?!” Dao-Heaven asked calmly, not even looking at the incoming river of light. As it neared, he shot forward through the river, appearing directly on the Sixth Nation’s National Aura Mountain. Just when Hong Bin was about to teleport away, Dao-Heaven lifted his right foot up and stomped down onto the mountain.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

A massive energy erupted out from him, causing the entire National Aura Mountain to shatter and collapse. Countless rocks and rubble tumbled out in every direction, and Hong Bin’s nine followers exploded into bits. The teleportation portal was also shattered, and Hong Bin was sent flying back, blood spraying out of his mouth, an expression of shock and terror on his face.

“Save me!” he screamed. He was in the Echelon, and was a proud person. But in this moment of critical danger, he abandoned all pride and fled.

Yuwen Jian let out a bellow of rage and attacked again.

Meng Hao also fell back. The level of power on display by Dao-Heaven had already struck him deeply. He had fought many people of his generation with cultivation bases similar to himself, but none of them could even compare to Dao-Heaven.

“So, is this the real Echelon...?” he thought, feeling shaken. After having defeated Han Qinglei, Lin Cong, and then Hai Dongqing, he had started to look down on the Echelon. As of this moment, all such feelings vanished.

“Nobody can save you now,” Dao-Heaven said casually, then laughed and transformed into a blur that shot over to Hong Bin. He raised his right hand and pointed a finger toward Hong Bin’s forehead.

The speed was so incredible that before Hong Bin could even do anything, the finger was about to tap onto his head.

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, the Lightning Cauldron appeared in Meng Hao’s hand. Electricity danced around him, and then he vanished. When he reappeared, shockingly, he was directly in front of Hong Bin. As for Dao-Heaven, he was now in the position that Meng Hao had just occupied.

Despite how powerful he was, he gaped in shock.

In that moment of shock, Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, filled with killing intent.

“Paragon magic, Paragon Bridge!!” He waved his hand, causing his cultivation base to surge with power. 123 Immortal meridians and 33 Heavens formed into the Paragon Bridge, which smashed down toward the astonished Dao-Heaven.

As for Hong Bin, there was really nowhere for him to flee to. He had just been snatched out of the jaws of death, and now he hesitated no longer. He performed an incantation gesture, causing his forehead to split open and two fish to fly out.

One of the fish was black, and the other was white. They spun in a circle, head-to-tail, creating a circle in midair. Black and white light shone out as they spun, gradually forming into a spell array. Shockingly, this spell array was Hong Bin’s Paragon magic!

“Paragon magic, Dao of Yin and Yang!”

Yuwen Jian threw his head back and roared, and brilliant red light surged up from him. By now, he had fully absorbed the drop of God blood that he had consumed earlier. Now, he could unleash his own Paragon magic.

“Paragon magic, God-Extermination Tattoo!” Yuwen Jian waved his

hand, causing half of his clothing to transform into nothing but ash. Shockingly, blood swirled on both his chest and back to form a tattoo of blood!

The tattoo depicted numerous gigantic Gods being massacred in one scene after another. A murderous aura exploded off of Yuwen Jian and, astonishingly, the area around him seemed to transform into the scenes from the tattoo. The sky turned the color of blood, and a multitude of shocking illusory figures could be seen everywhere.

All in one moment, Meng Hao, Yuwen Jian and Hong Bin all unleashed their Paragon magic.

Dao-Heaven's face flickered, and he suddenly lifted his right hand up and smacked it down onto his chest. Immediately, the sound of a thumping heart began to echo out.

Ba-dump. Ba-dump. Ba-dump... Nine heart beats boomed out like thunder, shaking the world. Furthermore, with each heartbeat, Dao-Heaven's energy shot higher and higher, until he was emanating an aura of the Ancient Realm!

After nine heartbeats, his power was almost indescribable. This was the aura of nine breakthroughs into the Ancient Realm, turning him into a fiendish divinity. When he threw his head back and roared, strange colors flashed in the sky.

"I have stepped into the Ancient Realm nine times before. Nine times, I forced myself back down to re-cultivate and break through again. Do you really think that weaklings like yourself could compare to me? You're DEAD, ALL of you!" Dao-Heaven's voice echoed with shocking pressure, weighing down heavily onto Meng Hao and the others.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he immediately said, "You stepped into the Ancient Realm nine times, but then forced yourself back down and started over? That means you made nine mistakes, picked nine wrong paths. If your path was correct... the one time would be enough!"

Then, he sent his Paragon magic rumbling out.

1. Dao-Heaven uses a variation on a Chinese idiom which basically means that summer insects cannot discuss ice, meaning that it is impossible to speak to people of limited experience.

Chapter 1119: Hong Bin Dies in Battle!

Dao-Heaven faced off haughtily against the Paragon magics of Meng Hao and the others. Suddenly, he took a breath, and his energy surged as he stretched his right hand up and waved it around.

“As for my Paragon magic, I have come to call it... Paragon Painting!” Even as the words left his mouth, the air in front of Dao-Heaven distorted and was ripped apart as a scroll painting flew out.

The scroll painting was pitch black and emanated a boundlessly ancient feeling. It seemed like something that had existed for countless years, and before it even opened, it emanated an incredible, murderous aura.

The power of that aura instantly caused bizarre colors to flash everywhere, and the wind to churn. It was impossible to even describe the level of power; this type of murderous aura was something that Meng Hao hadn't encountered in his entire life.

It seemed like an aura of someone who had ended countless lives, who had exterminated worlds upon worlds, who had proven his Paragon status by means of endless slaughter!

The air rumbled and distorted beneath the power of this aura of murder. The sky turned dark, as if it were being completely covered up, as if the whole world were turning black.

The ground quaked, and the murderous aura caused fog to spring up and roil out in all directions. In a brief moment, the entire world changed.

Meng Hao's heart was pounding, and it was the same with Yuwen Jian and Hong Bin, whose faces had fallen.

It was as if within this scroll painting hid a shocking, fiendish beast whose mere aura could suck away all the light of the world!

“Paragon Painting, open!” Dao-Heaven said proudly, performing an incantation gesture and pointing at the scroll painting. Noiselessly, the scroll painting began to open up, not fully, only about thirty percent. However, the thirty percent that was revealed gave a glimpse of the scene

depicted. It was a bizarre world, a world of pitch black, and if you looked closely, you would see... a land that seemed to embody death.

Nothing else was visible except for that land, nor would it be, unless the scroll painting was opened further.

However, that tiny portion caused an indescribable power to surge out, which spread out in all directions along with the murderous aura.

Heaven and Earth seemed to be on the verge of collapse. The world seemed about to fall apart. Massive power rumbled out, sweeping toward Yuwen Jian and completely shattering his Paragon magic. When the blood-colored images of Yuwen Jian's Paragon magic collapsed, he was flung backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Meng Hao felt as if a mountain had slammed into him. His body trembled, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He staggered backward thirty meters, and as he looked at Dao-Heaven's terrifying Paragon magic, he realized that it was something he couldn't even fight.

"Just what is painted inside of that scroll!?" he thought, heart trembling.

The worst off of the group was the boyish Hong Bin. He screamed and then coughed up a mouthful of blood as he shot backward. Before he could get very far, a blur sped through the air, which was none other than Dao-Heaven. His face was pale; apparently, the Paragon magics unleashed by Meng Hao and the others were not things that he could simply ignore, as he had their previous attacks.

They had forced him to the point of using Paragon magic to fight back. If any of his followers were present, they would surely be astonished by this. Dao-Heaven's pride was such that he had never actually unleashed his Paragon magic during battle with members of his generation. In fact, he would only use it to suppress powerful experts of the Senior generation.

But now, Meng Hao and the others had forced him to use it. Facing their combined attack had actually filled Dao-Heaven's heart with a sense of deadly crisis.

However, that sense of crisis led to the unleashing of his Paragon magic,

which instantly turned the tide of battle in his favor. He suddenly appeared directly in front of Hong Bin, his eyes flashing with killing intent as he waved his hand in an attack.

The simple wave of a hand unleashed explosive power, transforming into a will of slaughter that slammed into Hong Bin.

Seeing that he was about to be overwhelmed, a crazed look appeared in Hong Bin's eyes. He threw his head back and roared, choosing to self-detonate in the same moment that Dao-Heaven went in for the kill.

His eyes were bright red as his cultivation base exploded with mad power. As Hong Bin's body detonated, Dao-Heaven's pupils constricted. He flicked his sleeve, using his robe to defend himself. Hong Bin exploded, his body transforming into a tempest that swept out in all directions.

The massive blast shattered the sky and crushed the land. Dao-Heaven's will of slaughter was bashed away by the force of the explosion, and Dao-Heaven's face went pale. He was slightly injured by the impact, and yet he didn't cough up any blood.

Hong Bin took advantage of the moment to reform from the haze of blood. When he reappeared, he shot backward at top speed.

"Save me!" he screamed. He had died once before during his time in the Sixth Mountain, and if you coupled that with the self-detonation just now, it meant that he could no longer rely on being able to come back. The next time he died, he would die for good.

In the same moment that Hong Bin cried for help, Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian went on the offensive. Meng Hao unleashed the Essence of Divine Flame, and Yuwen Jian roared as red light swirled around him. His fist shot out, causing a figure of blood to appear, a towering giant who pounced toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven snorted coldly as Yuwen Jian's blood-colored giant closed in. He performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and pointed out. Suddenly, the Immortal Flail on his arm vanished, then snapped out from his finger, slamming into the blood-colored giant. A huge boom echoed out as the giant exploded. As for the Immortal Flail, it didn't stop,

but rather, continued straight on toward Yuwen Jian.

The person Dao-Heaven was actually the most concerned about was Meng Hao, whose Divine Flame was currently bearing down on him.

“Essence.... I have that too!” he suddenly said. He spit something out of his mouth, and the flash of lightning could be seen. It was a red lightning bolt that seemed to summon lightning from Heaven and Earth. Countless lightning bolts began to fall, transforming into a sea of lightning that shot toward Meng Hao’s Essence of Divine Flame.

When the two forces slammed into each other, the flame Essence and the lightning Essence both collapsed with a massive boom.

All of this takes a long time to describe, but the truth of the matter is that in the same moment that Dao-Heaven blocked Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian, he didn’t pause for even a moment before chasing after Hong Bin.

“DIE!” he said, his voice cool. His right hand clenched into a fist, and he punched out. That blow contained an indescribably wild wind, an explosive tempest that bore down onto Hong Bin.

The light of despair flashed in Hong Bin’s eyes, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing numerous spell formations to appear in front of him. He also waved his hand, sending various magical items flying out of his bag of holding. He even used life-saving magical items.

He didn’t spare a single thing in his defense. However, all of his spell formations and magical items were crushed by Dao-Heaven as easily as if they were dried weeds. Everything collapsed, and just as the tempest was about to slam into Hong Bin, Dao-Heaven suddenly transformed the fist into a claw, which latched onto Hong Bin’s forehead.

Dao-Heaven then coldly spoke out three words: “Heavenly Demon Devouring!”

Hong Bin immediately let out a bloodcurdling scream. His fleshly body rapidly withered away as his life force was absorbed by Dao-Heaven. Instantly, all of Dao-Heaven’s injuries were healed.

Blood sprayed out of Hong Bin's mouth, and as death neared him, a spell formation suddenly appeared on his forehead. The spell formation then exploded, shoving Dao-Heaven's hand away. Hong Bin was transformed into nothing but ash, with only his Immortal soul left behind. He let out a piercing cry, and a look of madness could be seen on his face.

"Yuwen Jian, Meng Hao, it would be better for you to get the reward for killing me than to let me fall by Dao-Heaven's hand! Swear to me that you'll avenge me by cutting him down!" Hong Bin feared death, but he was still a member of the Echelon. Echelon cultivators were proud, and when faced with death, they rarely acted indecisively. Without the slightest hesitation, he shot toward Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian's heart trembled, as did Meng Hao's. They had all miscalculated. Dao-Heaven was so strong that even the three of them together weren't strong enough to take him down.

"The only person who will be killing you... is me," Dao-Heaven said with a cold laugh. His right hand made a clawing motion toward Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian. Instantly, rumbling echoed out as the air between them was shattered, transforming into an obstacle-like distortion that separated them completely.

Then, Dao-Heaven shot like lightning toward Hong Bin, his eyes shining with anticipation.

"I wonder what reward I'll get for killing you, Hong Bin? Prepare to die!" Dao-Heaven raised his hand and grabbed out toward Hong Bin, upon whose face appeared a look of despair. Hong Bin was incapable of fleeing, and couldn't even self-detonate. It was as if his body was completely sealed off.

Just when he was on the verge of being killed, Meng Hao suddenly pulled out the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced, but at the same time, Dao-Heaven let out a roar. Suddenly, a red glow spread out, covering both him and Hong Bin. Unexpectedly, Meng Hao's Lightning Cauldron didn't work!

That didn't cause Meng Hao to pause for even a moment, however. He

raised his left hand and waved a finger toward Dao-Heaven.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed!

Dao-Heaven could be on guard against Meng Hao's Lightning Cauldron, but could do nothing to stop the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

As soon as the Hexing magic was unleashed, Dao-Heaven suddenly lurched to a stop. For the second time, his face fell, and a feeling of astonishment rose up inside of him.

He was only locked down for the space of about one breath of time. However, to Hong Bin, that one breath of time was enough for him to escape the shackles of being sealed.

However, he didn't take advantage of that moment to flee. He knew that getting away was an impossibility. Laughing bitterly, and eyes shining with determination, he flew directly toward Dao-Heaven in an attack.

"Get revenge for me!" he said, throwing his head back and roaring.

Yuwen Jian urgently cried out, "Hong Bin!!"

Meng Hao's heart trembled.

It was at this point that Hong Bin's Immortal soul closed in on Dao-Heaven. At the same time, Dao-Heaven was beginning to recover from the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. A vicious smile appeared on the face of Hong Bin's Immortal soul as he... self-detonated!

BOOOOMMMMMM!

The detonation of an Immortal soul alone would not unleash the same power as if the fleshly body exploded along with it. However... Hong Bin was in the Echelon, and as such, the detonation of his Immortal soul transformed into a power far beyond the ordinary. More importantly, the damage was increased because of his close proximity to Dao-Heaven, who was incapable of putting up a solid defense because he still hadn't fully recovered from Meng Hao's magical technique.

A huge, shocking boom echoed out as Hong Bin's Immortal soul exploded into nothing more than ash. Dao-Heaven was shaken, and

tumbled backward, coughing up blood. This was the first time during the fight that he coughed up blood, which splashed down onto the ground and formed a lake of blood.

“Meng Hao!!” Dao-Heaven roared, screeching to a halt in midair. His face was pale as he turned to look at Meng Hao, a murderous gleam in his eyes.

The two moments of danger he had experienced so far, had both been because of... Meng Hao!

This time, because Hong Bin had died by means of self-detonation, Dao-Heaven got no reward for killing him!

Chapter 1120: The Light of the Allheaven!

Yuwen Jian stared at the spot where Hong Bin had just died, his face ashen, hardly daring to believe what he had just seen.

“This is my fault....” he murmured.

“No it’s not,” said Meng Hao, grabbing him by the arm. “If we didn’t come, he still couldn’t have escaped from Dao-Heaven!” He pulled Yuwen Jian back. “We can’t keep fighting here, let’s go to the Fifth Nation!”

As Meng Hao backed up, Yuwen Jian’s expression returned to normal. Burying his guilt and self-blame deep in his heart, he looked over at Dao-Heaven, and the desire to kill flickered stronger than ever in his eyes.

He said nothing, though, and simply joined Meng Hao in retreating.

Dao-Heaven glared at Meng Hao and said, “Flee to the ends of the earth and I’ll still kill you today!”

He had been placed in mortal danger twice, all because of Meng Hao. Currently, his desire to kill Meng Hao had reached unprecedented heights. Without a moment’s hesitation, he shot after them in pursuit.

Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian fled, and Dao-Heaven pursued.

The three of them shot through the air in beams of light, sending rumbling sounds out in all directions. Dao-Heaven snorted coldly, and the air beneath his feet folded in on itself as he apparently borrowed power to gain a sudden burst in speed. This was clearly the unleashing of some secret magic. In the blink of an eye, his speed increased several-fold, and he was getting closer and closer to Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian.

Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly glittered, and he said quietly, “Yuwen Jian, you go on ahead!”

Then he spun and shot back toward Dao-Heaven. Yuwen Jian’s eyes flickered; he was an intelligent person, so after a moment of thought, he continued to flee.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao waved his hand, unleashing the Mountain

Consuming Incantation. One mountain after another rumbled down, forming together into a mountain range that crushed toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's eyes flickered with killing intent as he waved his hand, causing an explosive, violent wind to spring up. It was a black wind that contained biting coldness, and when it slammed into the mountains, they shattered. Dao-Heaven once again burst forward with incredible speed, nearly ten times as fast as before, to appear directly in front of Meng Hao. He grinned viciously as he jabbed his finger toward Meng Hao.

"DIE!" The finger moved with incredible speed until it was just about to stab through Meng Hao's forehead. However, in that moment, Dao-Heaven's eyes widened, and Meng Hao became nothing more than a ghost image.

Off in the distance, a flash of golden light could be seen, which was Meng Hao speeding away lightning-fast, in golden roc form. He had long since made his escape.

"How devious!" Dao-Heaven said with a cold harrumph. He originally thought that he could succeed with a single attack. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would have prepared in advance to flee in golden roc form, using the Mountain Consuming Incantation as a distraction.

The only thing he had left behind for Dao-Heaven was a fleeting ghost image.

"You can't get away!" he said, licking the blood from his lips and once again shooting after Meng Hao at top speed.

Meng Hao's face had an unsightly expression. He had never encountered anyone of his generation who was as strong as Dao-Heaven. He had to admit that, even in the Immortal Emperor Realm, he was still not a match for him.

"What kind of cultivation does he practice to get so strong? He entered the Ancient Realm nine times, and then pushed himself back down...?" Meng Hao frowned. Seeing that Dao-Heaven was chasing after him, he waved his hand to summon a Blood Demon head, which roared as it shot back toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven snorted coldly and did nothing to evade. As the Blood Demon head closed in with gaping maw, he pushed both hands out in front of him and grabbed onto the upper and lower jaw, then began to rip it apart.

The Blood Demon head let out a miserable shriek; it was no longer a mere illusory form, but even still, it was powerless to stop Dao-Heaven. This was the first time Meng Hao had ever seen anyone deal with the Blood Demon head in such a way.

However as soon as the Blood Demon head shattered, a blood mist spread out in all directions. Just as Dao-Heaven was about charge through it, his eyebrows suddenly shot up, and he unhesitatingly shoved his hand out in front of him.

As he made the motion, a fist shot out from within the mist of blood, which instantly made contact with Dao-Heaven's palm.

A huge boom rang out, and Dao-Heaven's face fell. He felt an incredibly powerful force surging out of the fist. He roared, and his body surged with red light as he pushed back against the fist.

The blood mist parted, revealing Meng Hao. The fist strike from just now had been his, and now that Dao-Heaven was resisting it, blood oozed out of his mouth. He backed up a bit, and his eyes went wide as he prepared to pursue. However, Meng Hao did not flee. Instead, he unleashed another punch.

One punch! Two punch! Three punches!

Meng Hao had seemingly gone mad. In rapid succession, he unleashed over ten Life-Extermination Fists toward Dao-Heaven.

The two of them flew through midair, zig-zagging back and forth as they got closer to the border of the Sixth and Fifth Nations.

Blood oozed constantly out of Meng Hao's mouth. After reaching the seventeenth punch, his eyes flickered, and he switched to the Bedevilment Fist.

The punches were delivered with incredible speed, and even as Dao-

Heaven countered with his palm, his expression flickered for the third time. His face was even paler than before, and as Meng Hao unleashed yet another punch, he fell back a pace.

As he fell back, Meng Hao shot forward, seizing the initiative. The Bedevilment Fist was once again unleashed with explosive force, once, twice, three times.

Dao-Heaven's face was extremely unsightly. He had now been forced back by two paces, and as Meng Hao's momentum built, he stepped back a third time.

"Are you looking to die!?" Dao-Heaven said coldly. After falling back a third time, he forced himself to step forward again. He lifted both hands into the air, stretched them out toward Meng Hao, and then ripped them apart!

"Heavenly Sundering!" he roared. As he jerked his hands apart, intense pain ripped through Meng Hao; it felt as if some intense power had entered his body and transformed into two massive hands that were trying to rip him into two pieces, starting with his chest.

In this moment of crisis, his eyes were shot with blood. He thought about using his second Nirvana Fruit, but decided against it. Now was not the time. He endured the pain, then sent his divine sense out into the area and, without any more hesitation, clenched his right hand into a fist, merging everything in the area into... the God-Slaying Fist!

God Slaying!

Rumbling could be heard as he growled and punched out. The blow caused Heaven and Earth to tremble in shocking fashion. It was as if all the heavenly bodies had been covered up, and even Dao-Heaven couldn't help but stare wide-eyed in shock.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

The blow screamed toward Dao-Heaven, smashing into the power of his Heavenly Sundering with a boom. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he tumbled backward.

Blood spurted out of Dao-Heaven's mouth. As the blood fell to the ground, it turned into another lake of blood. Dao-Heaven then waved his hand, causing it to bubble and boil, and then shoot toward Meng Hao. As for Dao-Heaven himself, his face was extremely unsightly, and his hands had actually been numbed.

"Thankfully I saw you use that fist strike against Lin Cong, and was able to prepare for it," he murmured. "Otherwise, it would have been difficult to deal with." The killing intent in his eyes flickered stronger than ever as he stepped forward to pursue Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sped backward, producing medicinal pills, which he immediately consumed. His Eternal stratum was also hard at work restoring him. Soon, he was near the border of the Sixth Nation. The Nine Nations of the Windswept Realm all had an invisible border region that existed between them.

Any time you passed through the border, your vision would swim, and you would feel pressure weighing down on you.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he caught sight of traces of Yuwen Jian's aura near the border region.

Without the slightest hesitation, he shot in the same direction as Yuwen Jian's aura, Dao-Heaven hot on his heels. The several-hundred-meter distance between them was rapidly shrinking.

Soon, Meng Hao passed through the border region, leaving the Sixth Nation and entering the Fifth Nation.

The pressure from the Fifth Nation instantly increased dramatically. Yuwen Jian was waiting just inside the border of the Fifth Nation, and as soon as he saw Meng Hao, he needed no prompting to guess at the plan Meng Hao had in mind. He threw his head back and roared, and his body rapidly increased in size. After a moment of preparation, he began to charge forward, passing Meng Hao and heading toward the barrier region.

Almost in that same instant, Dao-Heaven roared into the same area.

"So you're ambushing me in the border region between Nations, where

the pressure is different! Parlor tricks!” Dao-Heaven laughed coldly, and without any hesitation, performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. Immediately, a black lotus appeared, which instantly exploded.

Black fog roiled out, along with an incredible force that slammed into Yuwen Jian. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and yet, he didn’t fall back, but punched out. Dao-Heaven strode forward, waving his right arm, which caused the Immortal Flail to appear on his arm again. He instantly lashed it out toward Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian’s eyes flickered as the Immortal Flail closed in. Suddenly, he stretched his hand out and made a grasping motion. Rumbling could be heard as a battle-ax appeared in his hand! It was none other than the Ancient treasure that Meng Hao had acquired!

Meng Hao had delivered it surreptitiously when he had pulled at Yuwen Jian’s arm earlier, completely unbeknownst to Dao-Heaven. Yuwen Jian threw his head back and roared, then slashed at Dao-Heaven with the ax, unleashing power that could crush Heaven and Earth.

Dao-Heaven’s eyes went wide; this was something that exceeded his powers of prediction. He waved his hand in defense, and yet, almost at the same time, his face fell, not because of Yuwen Jian, but Meng Hao!

After entering the Fifth Nation, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding and pulled out his second Nirvana Fruit. Even as Dao-Heaven and Yuwen Jian began to fight, he slowly lifted the Nirvana Fruit up and pushed it down onto his forehead.

It sank into him, and he trembled as a terrifying aura erupted out from him.

This was what caused Dao-Heaven’s expression to fall yet again.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

Meng Hao threw his head back and roared as his body grew larger. 9 meters. 18 meters. 27 meters.... all the way to 45 meters. 60 meters.... 72 meters!

He was like a giant, with blue veins popping out on his head, his energy

bursting up. He now had only one Immortal meridian, and the power of his qi and blood, as well as his cultivation base, caused azure light to shine out from him!

That azure light was a color that embodied respect. That was... the light of the Allheaven!

Dao-Heaven's face fell, and his eyes filled with disbelief. He was panting, and inwardly, he felt the most intense sensation of deadly crisis that he had ever felt in his entire life!!

Chapter 1121: The Most Powerful State!

Dao-Heaven had a sudden, intense premonition that if he didn't do something to stop Meng Hao's aura from rising up explosively, then he could very well end up in the middle of a deadly catastrophe.

"Dammit, how could this Meng Hao be so strong!?!?" It was extremely rare for Dao-Heaven to encounter anyone who caused him to think in this way.

"Screw off!" Dao-Heaven managed to shove Yuwen Jian back, and then stepped forward amidst rumbling booms. Yuwen Jian was no match for him; even with the battle-ax, he was still forced into constant retreat. However, he didn't shirk from fighting. Roaring, he unleashed the full might of his body cultivation power, fighting fiercely with Dao-Heaven to buy time for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao shook as he reached a height of 72 meters. All of his Immortal meridians were now fused into one, and he was surrounded by brilliant azure light.

Unfortunately, he was now distinctly aware of the fact that he couldn't actually fight while powering up. He wanted to, but was incapable. This was his first time absorbing the Nirvana Fruit and reaching the Allheaven Immortal stage during a battle. The previous two times had been mere tests while in secluded meditation.

"Dammit!" he thought, growing anxious. However, no hesitation could be seen in his facial expression. His power continued to surge, and to anyone watching, it would seem obvious that there was more to come.

His aura rose past the Immortal Emperor Realm and he entered half a step into the Allheaven Immortal Realm. Terrifying ripples exploded off of him.

Colors flashed and the winds screamed, as if some huge eye had appeared up in the Heavens and was staring at Meng Hao.

Thunder crashed, and the sky above the Windswept Realm twisted and

distorted. The lands quaked, and the mountains trembled. The whole world seemed to be changing.

Dao-Heaven's eyes went wide when he saw Meng Hao's power rising up without stop. Even he had to admit that what he was seeing was terrifying to the extreme. He threw his head back and roared, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused his cultivation base to erupt with power. A black fog appeared in front of him, which churned as it transformed into a giant, one-horned beast that charged roaring toward Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian's face fell, and his anxiety grew. He wasn't sure what was going on with Meng Hao. Although they hadn't laid out specific plans, according to how the situation had developed, this moment was about the time when Meng Hao should make his move.

"Dammit, what's taking him so long!?" Yuwen Jian roared inwardly. He had half a mind to flee, but instead, gritted his teeth and faced the charging beast.

A huge boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Yuwen Jian's mouth. The cracking sounds of breaking bones could be heard. Blood spurted out, and he coughed up chunks of crushed internal organs, and he was sent flying backward. His aura was weakening, and yet, he clenched his teeth, roared, and then decided to go all-out. He hefted the battle-ax and slashed it viciously toward Dao-Heaven, who was trying to rush past him.

With a cold harrumph, Dao-Heaven took a step forward without attempting to dodge the blow at all, lifting his right hand up as he used the Immortal Flail to block the descending ax.

A boom rang out, and then Dao-Heaven turned, as if to shoot toward Meng Hao. Yuwen Jian let out a roar and pounced, attempting to grapple Dao-Heaven and hold him in place. Dao-Heaven's face turned grim.

"Are you looking to die!?" His right hand clenched into a fist and he punched Yuwen Jian in the stomach. Yuwen Jian's eyes went wide as he tumbled backward amidst a haze of blood and gore.

"Meng Hao," Yuwen Jian shouted with a bitter laugh, "you owe me a

life!” Even as the words came out of his mouth, his eyes gleamed with determination, and he charged again, preparing to expend one of his lives, in an attempt to block Dao-Heaven for a bit longer.

“DIE!” Dao-Heaven roared, waving his hand. The giant fog beast howled and lunged toward Yuwen Jian. Just when it seemed to be on the verge of hitting him, all of a sudden, the air in front of Yuwen Jian distorted, and a towering figure appeared.

It was none other than Meng Hao, standing there at more than 70 meters tall!

He immediately extended his hand and pushed it out toward the pouncing beast.

That motion caused the previously shocking beast to let out a shriek like a sick cat. It suddenly stopped in midair, incapable of moving a muscle, its expression one of fear and disbelief as Meng Hao reached out and crushed its head.

A boom could be heard as the beast exploded, sending bits of black fog roiling out in all directions.

“M-Meng Hao!” Yuwen Jian panted, shocked at the sight of the figure in front of him. Meng Hao glowed with azure light, and an archaic aura roiled off of him. It was almost as if... in this moment, Meng Hao was not a cultivator of the Mountain and Sea Realm, but instead, someone who had traveled through time from the primordial Paragon Immortal Realm.

He stood tall, radiating azure light. Faint, flickering magical symbols could be seen on him as he stood there like a mountain. The air vibrated and the lands trembled. The clouds up above seemed to lower themselves, as if in obeisance.

In the entire world, and in all the lands, it was as if Meng Hao were the only existence.

That was... a domineering aura that said, REVERE ME!

Meng Hao looked up at Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's face flickered with a serious expression as he stared back. Inside, he was starting to get nervous.

"Yuwen Jian, get out of here!" Meng Hao said slowly. Yuwen Jian would not be of any use in the battle to come, and if he stayed, it could be possible that Dao-Heaven might unleash something akin to the Blood Demon Grand Magic, or something even more sinister like the Heavenly Demon Devouring. That could put Meng Hao in a bad position.

Therefore, the best thing for Meng Hao was for him to leave!

Yuwen Jian stared deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, as if to affix him to memory. Yuwen Jian didn't have many friends, and even Hong Bin only counted as half a friend. However, in the brief bit of time he had spent with Meng Hao, he had already come to consider him a friend.

"I'm not going to give this battle-ax back to you if you die," he said. "So... don't get yourself killed!" Then he took a deep breath and sped off into the distance with all the speed he could muster. Dao-Heaven didn't even spare him a glance as he left; the threat posed by Meng Hao was far too great.

"Meng Hao!" he roared, and his body emanated cracking sounds. In the blink of an eye, he began to grow. His expression distorted, and when he reached a height of 60 meters, he threw his head back and roared. The sound of his heartbeat echoed out, and on the ninth beat, his energy peaked, and he strode toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was calm. He could sense the power of his sole Immortal meridian, as well as the terrifying strength of his fleshly body. He began to walk forward, then clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out toward Dao-Heaven.

That fist caused the sky to flash and the wind to scream. Dao-Heaven's face flickered, and yet he laughed viciously. As Meng Hao's fist strike neared, he suddenly vanished, then reappeared behind Meng Hao. At the same time, two black, leathery wings spread out from his back.

Next, his hand formed a claw shape, which he slashed toward Meng Hao's back.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, and he didn't even turn around. Instead, he pushed off with his feet, flying back-first toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's hand struck Meng Hao's back, causing a huge boom to echo out. Meng Hao didn't react, but Dao-Heaven's hand twisted in place, completely incapable of doing anything to Meng Hao. Then, Meng Hao slammed into Dao-Heaven.

An earsplitting boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Dao-Heaven's mouth. He flew back like a kite with its string cut, his expression one of shock as more than half the bones in his body broke.

"Impossible! How could he be so strong!?!?" In his astonishment, sonic booms echoed out from him from the incredible speed with which he was thrown through the air as a result of Meng Hao's vicious attack.

In the blink of an eye, he had passed across much of the Fifth Nation, and was actually nearing the border of the Fourth Nation. Subsequently, Meng Hao vanished, then suddenly reappeared directly in Dao-Heaven's path. He extended his right hand, and boundless azure light rose up from him as he used the power of an Allheaven Immortal to wave his finger.

"I'm the number one in the Echelon!" Dao-Heaven roared. "You can't beat me! This state of yours will only last for so long!!" Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he wrapped his wings around his body protectively. At the same time, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a shield to appear, as well as a vast number of magical items.

A boom could be heard as Meng Hao's Allheaven Finger pressed down onto the shield. Cracking sounds rang out in all directions, and layer by layer, the shield collapsed. Numerous magical items shattered, and then, Meng Hao's finger landed on Dao-Heaven's wings.

A boom rattled out as the wings were shredded to pieces, transforming into nothing but ash. Dao-Heaven screamed miserably as Meng Hao's finger continued on. Then, he raised his right arm, apparently intending to use the Ancient treasure, the Immortal Flail, to block.

Popping sounds filled the air, which came from the Immortal Flail

shattering. When it came into contact with Meng Hao's Allheaven Finger, the Ancient treasure was incapable of doing anything against it. Dao-Heaven's eyes went wide with disbelief.

All of a sudden, his right arm exploded into a haze of blood by the lightning-like strike of Meng Hao's finger.

"Undying God Magic!" Dao-Heaven cried in terror. Blood-red light rose up from his body, transforming into a magical symbol which slammed into Meng Hao's finger. The magical symbol trembled, but didn't break, and the mighty force of Meng Hao's finger attack sent Dao-Heaven tumbling backward.

In the blink of an eye, he had flown over the border between the Fifth Nation and the Fourth Nation. Once in the Fourth Nation, Dao-Heaven's magical symbol finally shattered. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his expression turned haggard. However, his desire to fight was not lessened at all. He threw his head back and howled as Meng Hao charged through the national barrier and flew toward him.

"Meng Hao, you can't kill me! How much longer can you hold out? Once you leave that state, you're dead!" Dao-Heaven coughed up chunks blood, and as Meng Hao closed in on him, performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his hand in front of him. Immediately, the air in front of him rumbled and shattered as a black streak of light flew out.

It was none other than a scroll painting, Dao-Heaven's Paragon magic!

"Paragon Painting, open!"

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the scroll painting began to open up in front of Meng Hao. This time, it didn't open thirty percent, but instead, seventy percent!

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on the unfurling scroll painting, it revealed a land filled with killing intent. In the middle of the land was a statue of a young man in a black robe, sitting there cross-legged. He had long hair that draped down onto the land upon which he sat.

Rising up from him was an indescribably cold murderous aura.

Chapter 1122: I Call Him Slaughter!

As soon as the intense murderous aura appeared, it roiled out in all directions, kicking up clouds of dust. Lightning crashed repeatedly, and the entire world was stained by the aura of killing until it was black.

It was as if the statue in that scroll was no longer a painting. Furthermore, the Windswept Realm no longer seemed to be the Windswept Realm, but instead, the world inside the scroll painting.

Everything was pitch black, both the land and the sky. And yet somehow, Meng Hao could see everything clearly.

The statue was sitting there cross-legged, wearing black robes. All of a sudden, it twitched, and then slowly began to look up.

It was a simple motion, but it caused rumbling sounds to fill the entire world. The flow of time seemed to cease, and the natural laws seemed to be thrown into massive chaos. Before this person, Essences seemed to prostrate and kowtow in worship.

An intense killing aura stabbed into Meng Hao's eyes like a sharp arrow, piercing into his mind, causing his entire body to shake. His face fell as he was suddenly filled with an intense sensation of deadly crisis.

This sensation of danger did not come from Dao-Heaven, but rather, from the black-robed figure in the painting.

"Who is he?" Meng Hao thought, his heart pounding. "Just what kind of Paragon magic is this!?" Every Echelon cultivator had different Paragon magics, and of the various types that he had encountered, only Dao-Heaven's left him so astonished.

Meng Hao's expression was very serious. He was in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, and knew that he was bursting with power. In fact, without this Paragon magic, Dao-Heaven would not be a match for him.

It didn't matter that Dao-Heaven had entered the Ancient Realm nine times before. Each of those times, he had been treading an incorrect path. Meng Hao's path was that of the Allheaven Immortal, an ancient path,

and the most powerful in the Immortal Realm!

Dao-Heaven looked at Meng Hao, his eyes blazing with killing intent. "You said before that my path was wrong...."

"My path was most certainly incorrect. Of that I am well aware. What you don't know is that there is a reason why I continued to tread the same incorrect path, and then return back to the Immortal Realm. That is because the path I want... is the path cultivated by the man in my magical Paragon painting!

"I don't know his name, nor do I know what this painting truly depicts.... But what I do know is that the painting is ordinary, the paper is ordinary, and even the wooden rollers are ordinary. The only thing beyond ordinary about it is the black-robed figure inside.

"Because of him, the ordinary paper and the commonplace wooden rollers transformed into something miraculous and extraordinary.

"He represents slaughter, and is filled with a murderous aura the likes of which I have never encountered anywhere else in my life. Because of that, I call him Slaughter, and in my heart, I view him as... my Master!"

As Dao-Heaven's words rang out, he knelt in front of the scroll painting, his eyes burning with passion as he kowtowed deeply. After he kowtowed, the statue finished looking up, and its face was finally revealed.

It was a pale face, expressionless, and seemingly ordinary. However, within those ordinary facial features could be seen an indescribable iciness as he stared coldly at Meng Hao.

A mere look caused Meng Hao's body to shake. He felt an unspeakable pressure crushing down onto him, something superior even to the pressure of the Ninth Sea. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and despite being in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, he began to stagger backward.

He had no desire to fall back, but the gaze of the black-robed man in the scroll painting gave him no choice.

As he fell back, the pressure from the man in the painting pushed down on him to the point where it seemed he couldn't take it anymore, and

would be forced to his knees, forced to capitulate, forced to offer worship!

With every step that he took back, Meng Hao roared. Finally, after seven steps had been taken, and his eyes were completely bloodshot, he forced himself to come to a stop. The price he had to pay was that a cloud of blood sprayed out of his mouth.

His knees shook so violently they felt like they might break.

“I can’t believe I’m being forced into retreat by nothing more than a painting!” he thought. “Even if the person in that painting was once an almighty figure, perhaps even a Paragon, right now... he’s just a painting. Why the hell... can he force me to fall back!?” Meng Hao struggled to hold his head up, and a vicious expression appeared on his face. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. However, at the same time, his aura surged mightily.

“My Dao is that of freedom and independence!” he growled. “Other than my father and mother, there’s nobody in the world... who can make Meng Hao kowtow! Who the hell do you think you are!?” He finished with a roar, and his Allheaven Immortal cultivation base spun rapidly. His only Immortal meridian rapidly expanded, forming the framework of a bridge inside of him!

He waved his right hand ferociously, and that bridge-like Immortal meridian suddenly erupted with power. Endless rumbling echoed out as it materialized... a real bridge, right in front of him!

The Paragon Bridge!

Meng Hao’s Paragon magic was a powerful Dao to begin with. Although its power had seemed rather ordinary early on, that was not because of the magic itself, but rather, because Meng Hao’s cultivation base had not been powerful enough to manifest much of it.

Now, though, in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, the unleashing of the Paragon Bridge was completely unlike before. Rumbling filled the air as the majestic bridge descended right in front of Meng Hao, causing the sky to vibrate, shattering the land.

It didn't appear to be illusory, but rather, a true and actual bridge. It was shocking, indescribably large, as if the entire world was but a mere corner of it.

The bridge filled the sky, sweeping across everything, and it emanated the supreme aura of a Paragon. The world trembled, and the lands were terrified. By using the Allheaven Immortal Realm, Meng Hao had finally... revealed some of its true splendor and power!

And yet, there was more! Illusory figures appeared atop the bridge. Although it was impossible to see them clearly, they existed on various locations on the bridge.

These figures radiated terrifying might, and apparently, were people from the past who had qualified to stride upon the Paragon Bridge. Although they did not end up walking across the entire bridge, as former almighty figures in Heaven and Earth, they were able to leave behind some divine will.

In the same moment that the Paragon Bridge appeared, the black-robed statue in the painting looked at it, and a look of reminiscence appeared on his face. He suddenly murmured... "Heaven Trampling... Bridge...." 1

His voice was filled with the sensation of memories, and yet, the same coldness as before.

This turn of events caused even Dao-Heaven's face to fill with utter shock. His head jerked up in the middle of his kowtow, an expression of disbelief could be seen on his face. The scroll painting was his, and the Paragon magic was his.

And yet... even he had never before heard the black-robed figure within speak a single word!

It was as if the appearance of the Paragon Bridge had provoked some unpredictable transformation. Even as Dao-Heaven's heart trembled, Meng Hao's mind began to spin.

"Heaven Trampling Bridge?" he thought, staring at his own Paragon Bridge.

Shockingly, the black-robed statue in the painting suddenly rose to his feet and took a step forward, his long hair trailing behind him.

When he took that step, Dao-Heaven's heart trembled. Meng Hao was standing directly in his path, and could see things even more clearly. It was as if the step he took contained some type of Dao, something that could bend space and shrink a huge span to the distance of an inch, something that could create something from nothing. With that step, he emerged from the painting, entered reality and appeared... on top of Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge.

Meng Hao's mind spun as he looked at the black-robed figure standing atop the Paragon Bridge. The young man's expression was cold, but it was also tinged with reminiscence. He began to walk across the Heaven Trampling Bridge, step after step, passing numerous other figures, as if he wished to walk the bridge to its very end.

But then he stopped walking. He looked down at the bridge beneath his feet, and seemed to grow melancholic.

"This Heaven Trampling Bridge is incomplete...." he murmured.

"I... am also incomplete...."

"That year... I stood in front of him, and her, my mission accomplished. Then I turned, heart filled with a strange pain, with sorrow, and I vanished...."

"So why...? Why am I still here...?" Then he began to laugh, a laughter filled with icy coldness, and a murderous aura.

"I loved her more than you did!!" Laughing maniacally, the black-robed figure swished his sleeve. Rumbling could be heard as the Paragon Bridge collapsed. As it did, the black-robed figure trembled and faded away along with the Heaven Trampling Bridge, his expression one of reminiscence and pain.

When he reappeared, he was back inside the scroll painting, a statue once again, his head bowed.

When that happened, Dao-Heaven made a gurgling sound and vomited a

mouthful of blood. A mist of blood exploded around him; apparently, the scroll painting possessed a gravitational force that absorbed nearly half of his life force. Dao-Heaven trembled, and his face went pale white.

He had used this Paragon magic on many occasions, but never had it resulted in a backlash like just now.

Meng Hao also coughed up a mouthful of blood and fell back. He could sense that his time as an Allheaven Immortal was reaching its conclusion. Eyes glittering, he reached up and patted the top of his head, voluntarily leaving the Allheaven Immortal Realm. The Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead and dropped down into the palm of his hand. His aura dropped, and his face turned ashen. He stood there, unmoving, staring coldly at Dao-Heaven.

“Still wanna keep fighting?” he said calmly.

Dao-Heaven panted as the scroll painting faded away. Then he looked over at Meng Hao, smiled coldly, and said, “What, are you scared? You’re beyond weak now! I could kill you as easily as turning over my hand!”

Inwardly, though, he was hesitant. He still wasn’t completely sure whether or not Meng Hao could continue fighting in that incredibly powerful state.

Hundreds of thoughts ran through Meng Hao’s head. Originally, his plan was to try to intimidate Dao-Heaven through his calmness. But then, he realized something, and came up with a new plan. Frowning, he looked over at Dao-Heaven and then held his Nirvana Fruit fruit out in the palm of his hand, where it glittered with brilliant light.

“To kill you would cost me quite a bit,” he said. “I would end up heavily injuring myself, which would make it a lot harder to get anything more out of the Windswept Realm.

“However, if you’re intent on dying, then I can help you reach your goal.”

Dao-Heaven’s eyes went wide as he looked at Meng Hao. Had Meng Hao remained calm, he would immediately have assumed he was trying to pull a fast one. However, to see Meng Hao frown the way he did made it seem

like he was making this decision because he had no other choice. Suddenly, Dao-Heaven wasn't quite sure what was the truth.

"I'll know for sure if I just attack him!" he thought. Eyes flickering, he shot toward Meng Hao.

*

1. By this point, most Er Gen fans would have put some puzzle pieces together regarding who this person probably is, or at least, who he is connected to. Long story short is that Wang Lin from Renegade Immortal had a clone (specifically a Slaughter Clone), whose actual name had the Chinese character "slaughter" in it. He reached an extremely high cultivation level in RI, a level called "Heaven Trampling," which involved nine bridges. Unfortunately, because this information is relevant to the plot of ISSTH, it necessitates these spoilers regarding untranslated portions of RI.

Chapter 1123: Dao-Heaven Retreats!

Almost in the exact moment that the murderous thoughts rose up in Dao-Heaven's mind, he shot forward. Meng Hao snorted coldly and suddenly backed up. At the same time, he decisively pushed the Nirvana Fruit down into his forehead. Simultaneously, intense killing intent flickered up in his eyes.

His cold gaze locked onto Dao-Heaven in the same way it might look at a corpse.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Nirvana Fruit merged into his forehead. His energy immediately shot up. This time, the effect was different than before. He wasn't immobilized as his body grew larger. Azure light flickered into being around him, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Then he waved his hand at Dao-Heaven, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to erupt out, which filled the sky.

Dao-Heaven's heart trembled, and he suddenly lurched to a stop before shooting backward. As it turned out, he didn't actually want to keep fighting Meng Hao to the death. He didn't even want to fight at all. The backlash from his Paragon Painting had left him extremely weak. Most importantly... he wasn't confident in being able to take Meng Hao out right now.

Seeing Meng Hao once again enter that terrifying state confirmed... that Meng Hao was capable of killing him.

"This magic of his has a set time limit, or maybe it's limited in the number of times he can use it. Well, whatever the limitations are, he'll still have to pay a price to use it.... That was something he wasn't lying about!

"Even if he did kill me, he couldn't kill my soul; I still have lives left. And actually, the Windswept Realm trial by fire isn't over yet. If we both get severely injured... not only would other Echelon cultivators try to take advantage of the situation, we might lose our chance at getting more good fortune from the Windswept Realm!

“Besides, there’s no saying whether or not he could actually kill me in the final battle. Conversely, even if I can kill him, then I would likewise be devastated, and wouldn’t be able to recover quickly or easily.” Dao-Heaven had an extremely unsightly expression on his face. If Meng Hao hadn’t struck fear into his heart, he wouldn’t be vacillating in such a way. But now, the facts were out in the open, and he had no choice but to consider the consequences of them inflicting serious injuries on each other.

As he retreated, Meng Hao stood in place. Instead of giving chase, he looked over coldly.

“Unless you want a fight to the death, don’t come looking for me. My patience... has its limits!” Then he took a step forward, stamping his foot onto the ground. The ground quaked and the air vibrated as an incredible power surged up from him. A shockwave blasted out in all directions.

Dao-Heaven continued to flee. He was still suspicious, but he had no way to tell whether or not Meng Hao was simply putting on a show. It was hard to tell, and he was forced to simply guess.

His facial expression constantly flickered as he ran through the possibilities in his mind, and his eyes glittered. Finally, he laughed loudly.

“Are you so anxious to finish our little fight, Meng Hao? There are many paths to follow. If you want to pick this one, who am I to stop you?”

Meng Hao shook his head. Energy surging, he shot forward, leaving afterimages behind him. He waved his hand, causing Divine Flame to spread out above Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven’s face fell, and he instantly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger toward the ground. Black fog roiled up, transforming into a rumbling vortex. A huge hand then stretched up out of the vortex, which pushed out toward the Divine Flame.

At the moment, raging flames covered Meng Hao’s face, making it so that Dao-Heaven couldn’t see his face clearly. All he could see were his cold eyes, flickering with killing intent.

Meng Hao didn't pause for even a second. As the Essence of Divine Flame and Dao-Heaven's magical technique slammed into each other, he strode forward and said, "God Slaying!"

His right hand clenched into a fist, seemingly embodying the will and might of Heaven. The qi flow of the Windswept Realm converged, and his Allheaven Immortal cultivation base caused colors to flash and the wind to scream.

Dao-Heaven's face fell as he continued to retreat, performing a double-handed incantation gesture. A portal suddenly appeared, which slammed open to reveal nine Bone Dragons. Roaring, they flew out of the portal toward Meng Hao, surging with energy.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

Meng Hao's fist caused the world to shatter. The nine Bone Dragons let out plaintive shrieks as they were shattered into tiny pieces. Dao-Heaven took a deep breath, and then flashed through the air, instantly falling back by 3,000 meters. Then he laughed.

"Meng Hao, fighting like this is meaningless. Since you don't really feel like continuing, then I, Chen, will just take my leave...." Obviously, Dao-Heaven was his Daoist name, whereas his true surname was Chen. With that, Dao-Heaven fled, his expression normal, but his heart filled with vigilance.

"Based on his personality," he thought, "if he actually stops fighting because of what I said, then I'll know he's trying to trick me!" As Dao-Heaven fled, his expression and demeanor made it seem as if he truly wished to get away.

Meng Hao's face was covered by the Divine Flame, and as such, Dao-Heaven couldn't see anything more than Meng Hao's eyes. Those eyes didn't change at all, and in fact, grew colder than ever. Even as Dao-Heaven attempted to flee, Meng Hao caused the starstone in his eyes to melt, covering his body so that he transformed into a planet!

It was a planet wreathed in Divine Flame, making it look like a shooting star as it sped after Dao-Heaven.

Based on its speed and trajectory, it really seemed as if he wanted to catch up.

Dao-Heaven realized this, and his expression turned dark.

“So he really does still have enough power to stay in that Realm!!” Even as Meng Hao closed in, Dao-Heaven suddenly increased his speed. In a flash, he was a great distance away.

“Meng Hao,” he called behind him, “have you met a girl named Xue’er yet?”

“If not, I should really leave you alive so that you have a chance to meet her!”

“Next time we run into each other, though, that will be the day you die!” Laughing, he shot off with incredible speed.

“Pipe down!” Meng Hao said from within the planet, his voice echoing out with incredible pressure. He continued to give chase for another several thousand meters. However, considering Dao-Heaven’s incredible speed, soon there was no trace of him. Meng Hao slowly came to a stop. The planet disappeared, and his human form reappeared.

He looked no different than he usually did. The Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead and dropped into his hand. He hovered there in midair, expression cold, looking in the direction Dao-Heaven had fled. Finally, he gave a cold harrumph, turned, and headed off in a different direction.

He took his time leaving, and as for the direction he chose, it was none other than the Third Nation.

Not long after he disappeared over the horizon, a strand of black smoke appeared on the battlefield. It swirled together in midair to reveal an illusory image of Dao-Heaven, frowning. As Meng Hao disappeared in the distance, he let out a sigh.

“So, he wasn’t trying to trick me. After fighting me, he actually chose to go to the Third Nation! This Meng Hao... is a formidable opponent.” The illusory figure shook his head, then vanished.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was calmly making his way across the border of the Fourth Nation and into the Third Nation.

As soon as he entered the Third Nation, he staggered to a stop and coughed up eight successive mouthfuls of blood. With each mouthful of blood, his body wasted away by ten percent. After only a few breaths of time had passed, he was so skinny that he looked like nothing more than a bag of bones. His hair had even turned completely gray.

His expression lackluster, he very nearly fell down to the ground. As he stood there, he smiled bitterly.

He actually had tricked Dao-Heaven. His final decision to enter the Allheaven Immortal Realm came at the price of burning his life force almost to the very limit. In fact, he couldn't have proceeded much further even if he wanted to.

It was only when he reached this point, and was behind the barrier between nations, a place where Dao-Heaven wouldn't be able to observe him, that he allowed himself to weaken rapidly. As the blood sprayed out of his mouth, he grew weaker and weaker.

"This Dao-Heaven is incredibly powerful!" he murmured. The reason he had covered his face with the Essence of Divine Flame earlier was because he didn't want Dao-Heaven to realize that he was burning his life force. It was for the same reason that he chose to use the One Thought Stellar Transformation to become a planet in the final chase.

Furthermore, the reason he chose to come to the Third Nation was that, according to his analysis of the situation, the fact that Dao-Heaven had avoided the Third Nation on multiple occasions made it obvious that something was fishy. Picking the Third Nation made it seem like he was far stronger than he actually was.

Fooling Dao-Heaven was not an easy thing. He was incredibly devious and suspicious, and made numerous probing attempts to find out if Meng Hao was trying to trick him. To Meng Hao, it was like walking along the edge of a cliff. Even the slightest misstep could have left him in grave danger.

“What a pity.... If I could fully absorb the second Nirvana Fruit, and truly step into the Allheaven Immortal Realm, then I could definitely kill Dao-Heaven. Right now, though... I’m not a match for him.” Meng Hao frowned. He had to admit that in all the years he had practiced cultivation, and among all the countless Chosen he had encountered, because of all the good fortune he had encountered, there was no one in his generation who was a match for him. He was even capable of sweeping over the Echelon.

Except for the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven. He was a truly formidable opponent!

After all, although Meng Hao had practiced cultivation for a much shorter time than Dao-Heaven, who had deep and profound resources at his disposal, Meng Hao also had significant good fortune, and was far beyond ordinary. Anyone who got into the Echelon was by default an extraordinary person.

Also, anyone who had a chance of being acknowledged by Xue’er, the successor of Immortal Ancient, could by no means be a weakling.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, and he produced some medicinal pills to consume. After a moment, his eyes widened as he suddenly realized something.

“How come I didn’t feel any pressure after entering the Third Nation?” Before, every time he passed through border barrier from one nation to another, there would always be pressure weighing down. The only time it hadn’t happened was here in the Third Nation.

“Dao-Heaven always seemed to avoid the Third Nation....

“There must be some mysterious secret about this place.

“However, that’s a good thing for me, since I’ll be able to focus fully on healing myself. Although, I don’t want to stay here for too long. Once I’ve recovered a bit, I’ll head back to the Ninth Nation.” He flew onward, and before long reached a mountain range, where he found a remote cave. After settling down to meditate, he sealed the cave mouth.

However, in almost the same moment that he began to meditate, his eyes snapped open. A brilliant red light had just begun to shine up from the blood-colored mask inside his bag of holding. Even the bag of holding was incapable of covering it up.

Simultaneously, Meng Hao could sense the aura of the Blood Mastiff. It had been years since the Blood Mastiff had dissipated in the midst of protecting him. Although he had sensed signs that it might awaken on numerous occasions, this was the strongest by far.

Meng Hao was delighted, and immediately took the blood-colored mask out of his bag of holding and sent some divine sense into it. As soon as he felt the Blood Mastiff, he realized that a connection and resonance had sprung up between them.

There was an aura of blood in the area, which was incredibly enticing to the Blood Mastiff. It filled it with desire and was the main reason why it was now waking up.

That blood was coming from the earth! From deep within the earth!

Chapter 1124: For the True Dao!

Around the same time that Meng Hao entered the Third Nation, the middle-aged man in the Imperial robes who sat cross-legged on the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain was looking into a crystal ball that floated in front of him.

Light swirled about inside the crystal ball, and apparently, an entire world existed isolated therein. If you looked closely, you would be able to tell that within that isolated world were three people. They were screaming, and apparently wished to be able to break out of the world, but could not.

If Meng Hao were there to see them, he would be incredibly shocked, perhaps even feel his scalp go numb. That was because... he knew two of them!

One was the dead boy Hong Bin, and the other... was the tenth Echelon cultivator Hai Dongqing!

As for the third person, it was easy to imagine who it might be. As expected, it was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Nation, who had died by Dao-Heaven's hands.

Although those three people were already dead, their souls appeared to be sealed inside of that crystal ball. What a bizarre situation!

Suddenly, the man in the Imperial robes opened his eyes, and a mysterious light could be seen glowing within them. He slowly turned to look in the direction of the border between the Third and Fourth Nations. In the same moment, Meng Hao entered the Third Nation.

This man's cultivation base was not incredibly high, and he was not even in the Immortal Realm. However, he had a bizarre aura floating around him that made him seem completely mysterious and enigmatic.

At the same time that he opened his eyes, numerous figures appeared around him, either standing on the mountain peak or floating above it. All of them wore black robes, with cowls that covered their heads, making it

impossible to see their faces. However, all of those figures emanated the ripples of the Ancient Realm.

Of course, cultivators of the Windswept Realm were incapable of breaking through to even the Immortal Realm, let alone the Ancient Realm. And yet here were multiple powerful experts of the Ancient Realm. Furthermore, among the black-robed experts were two or three whose cultivation base ripples were stronger than the others, indicating that they were comparable to Elders from various sects and clans in the Mountain and Sea Realm, with ten or more extinguished Soul Lamps.

All of them hovered there silently, awaiting the orders of the man in the Imperial robes.

As for that very man, his expression was the same as ever as he waved his right hand, causing numerous flickering images to appear in front of him. One of those images depicted Meng Hao entering the Third Nation.

He watched thoughtfully as Meng Hao coughed up blood, his body withering. The man's eyes flickered.

"Is the girl taken care of?" he asked suddenly.

"We sent people to kill her," said one of the black-robed cultivators, his voice hoarse, like that of an old man. "Unfortunately, she's very crafty, and has managed to evade them thus far. She's still alive."

"She's a dangerous variable," the man in the Imperial robes said. "Go take care of her yourself, just to be safe. Time is wasting away, so make it happen quickly!"

"For the true Dao!" the black-robed man said earnestly, clasping hands and bowing.

"For the true Dao!" responded the man in the imperial robes.

"For the true Dao!" the rest of the black-robed men chanted fervently in unison, lowering their heads.

"Regarding Meng Hao... he counts for nothing, much the same as Dao-Heaven. They are ants in a maze, nothing more. Ignore them. If he dares

to come to the National Aura Mountain, then just as Dao-Heaven, he will flee in fright and never dare to set foot back into the Third Nation again. We should tangle with the Echelon only if necessary, so leave them alone. They will become useful to us later. Soon, when we leave this mountain, then... we will achieve our grand design!" The man smiled, gazed into the crystal ball for a long moment, and then closed his eyes.

The black-robed men maintained silence. After clasping hands and bowing, they slowly dispersed, each one heading in a different direction.

In his Immortal's cave in the Third Nation, Meng Hao's heart trembled as he looked down at the blood-colored mask. Then he glanced at the ground. Eyes flickering, he sent out some divine sense into the earth. After a moment passed, he frowned. His divine sense wasn't able to locate anything unusual.

However, from the way the mastiff was struggling to awaken, he could tell that its intense thirst was increasing. Meng Hao had never sensed anything like this from the mastiff before.

It was as if, in order to sate that thirst, the mastiff would not only awaken, but do so in a transmogrified state. It would be different than before, having undergone a drastic transformation.

"What exactly is hidden down there...?" he thought. Instead of doing anything rash, he put the blood-colored mask away, closed his eyes, and continued meditating to heal his injuries.

With medicinal pills and his Eternal stratum, he recovered rapidly. After only three days, his eyes opened, and they shone with a brilliant light.

"I'm sixty percent recovered...." he murmured. "From here on out my recovery will naturally slow down." During the three days he had spent recuperating, the mastiff's thirst had only gotten stronger.

He slapped his bag of holding, and the parrot and meat jelly flew out. They looked around nervously for a moment but, seeing no danger, heaved sighs of relief.

"Don't worry, Dao-Heaven isn't chasing us," Meng Hao said with a cold

snort. Sometimes the parrot and meat jelly acted fearless in the face of death. At other times, they seemed like unbelievable cowards. The whole thing was a huge headache for Meng Hao. He just couldn't believe that they were unaware of the battle that had occurred with Dao-Heaven. He had even considered directly summoning them.

However, during the heat of the battle, both of them had been busy playing dead.

"Hey, you can't blame Lord Fifth for this," said the parrot with a guilty chuckle. "Considering Lord Fifth's level of skill, a single glance and a few breaths of time would be all it took to wipe Dao-Heaven out thousands of times over. The problem was I really happened to be napping at the time. Hahaha."

"Lord Third disagrees," the meat jelly said solemnly. "Lord Third thinks that you need practice! In order to become truly strong, you need more and more experience! Lord Third will never help you unless it's absolutely, positively necessary!"

To hear the meat jelly say something like this caused Meng Hao to stare in shock. Historically speaking, the meat jelly would always just copy the parrot. It wasn't just Meng Hao who was taken aback; the parrot was also stunned.

"Did you two get into an argument?" Meng Hao asked curiously.

The parrot cleared its throat, then glared threateningly at the meat jelly.

"Old Third is actually right," it said, putting on an air of superiority. "It seems there's no need for Lord Fifth to hide the truth from you. It's true. Unless there is an extremely deadly crisis, we won't do anything to help you."

"That's right!" yelled the meat jelly. "Lord Third and this evil bird did get into an argument. Damned pigeon. Henceforth, our differences are irreconcilable!"

"What did you just say! I DARE you to say it again!" squawked the parrot, its feathers standing on end.

“I’ll say it again,” roared the meat jelly, glaring at the parrot. “I’ll even say it three times!”

Meng Hao instantly felt a headache coming on. Seeing that the two of them were about to start arguing, he snapped, “Enough! If you want to argue, you can do it back inside the bag of holding. Parrot, look around and see if you can see anything strange about this place. Meat jelly, you check it out too. There’s something off here, there’s uh... some bullies!”

At first the meat jelly looked disdainful, but as soon as it heard bullies mentioned, its eyes shone brightly. It looked closely at the ground, and then suddenly gasped.

“There really are bullies! Lots of bullies!!”

The parrot looked over, and its expression flickered with disbelief.

“Desolate Blooddriven Heavenly Departure formation!!

“That’s an ancient evil spell formation, and yet people nowadays are still able to use it!? It operates on sacrifices, but to offer sacrifices here... this is impossible!!”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and he sent out his divine sense to merge with the parrot and meat jelly. In that instant, his mind trembled, and he suddenly saw numerous images. Deep down in the earth, far, far below, was a sprawling necropolis!

The necropolis was huge, and featured ninety-nine gigantic pits of boiling blood. The boiling blood let off a blood-colored mist that swirled up into the air.

Sitting cross-legged next to each of the ninety-nine blood pits were countless cultivators. Their cultivation bases were not very advanced, and so skinny that they looked like bags of bones. They stood next to the pits, fanatical expressions on their faces as they slashed their arms with knives and poured the blood out into the pits.

Gradually, the sound of chanting could be heard, filling the necropolis.

Deeper into the necropolis were dozens of black-robed figures, sitting

cross-legged in meditation. They appeared to be standing guard. Because they were protected by what seemed to be a spell formation, Meng Hao couldn't make out the level of their cultivation bases.

Most shocking of all was that at the bottom of each of the ninety-nine blood pits was a cultivator, sitting there cross-legged. There were ninety-nine of them, one for each pit, and considering that they were submerged in blood, if it weren't for the fact that Meng Hao was using a special vision technique, he wouldn't be able to see them.

Meng Hao recognized one of those cultivators. It was none other than... the old man from the Ninth Nation, Jian Daozi!

Meng Hao began to pant. With the help of the parrot and meat jelly, his vision pierced down into the blood pits. What he saw was that the pits were actually shaped like funnels, and if you looked closely, there were eyelets at the bottom.

Beneath those eyelets, and beneath the ninety-nine blood pits, was a tunnel that led to another part of the necropolis.

It was much smaller than the main necropolis, almost like a secret chamber connected to the larger structure up above. Both structures together almost looked like an inverted bottle gourd!

Within that secret chamber were several statues that resembled spirit creatures, including a turtle, a crane, and even a bat.

The statues were connected by a ray of light that linked them together, forming a circle. In the middle of that large circle, in the very center of the secret chamber, was a blood-colored block of ice!

That blood-colored block of ice contained something sealed inside of it... a blood-colored bat!

That bat looked the same in every respect as the the bat statue among the surrounding group of statues!

Currently, the block of ice was melting, and as it did, a blood qi rose up into the tunnel above, to be absorbed by the ninety-nine eyelets!

“What is all this?!” thought Meng Hao, his face flickering. When he looked at the blood-colored block of ice, he immediately felt an aura of boundless evil buffet against him. Although he was only looking at it with divine sense, and was separated from it by the parrot and meat jelly, he could still sense it. It was an evil filled with madness and terrifying power.

It was definitely... something that cultivators couldn't control. It was like something that exceeded the natural laws of Heaven and Earth, and even that of Essence.

“That's... a renegade spirit....” the parrot murmured.

Chapter 1125: Take Its Place!

“Renegade spirit....” It was a term Meng Hao wasn’t familiar with. But from the way the parrot said it, it sounded like something that had a long, complicated history.

The meat jelly looked confused at first, but after a moment appeared to have recalled something, and it started to shake.

At the same time, the Blood Mastiff, who was still in his bag of holding, inside the blood-colored mask, began to struggle with an even stronger thirst, as if... it wanted to consume that blood-colored bat!!

Meng Hao’s face flickered as he retracted his divine sense from the necropolis. He sat there in the Immortal’s cave, lost in thought and hesitation. However, inside the blood-colored mask, the Blood Mastiff was emanating an intense thirst that seemed to be reaching a peak.

“So you want to eat it, huh...?” Meng Hao murmured. He suddenly clenched his teeth. If he wanted his cultivation base restored to its peak, it would take over a month, even with the combination of medicinal pills and his Eternal stratum.

However, too many things could happen in a month. There were strange goings-on in the Third Nation, and he had no desire to stay here any longer than necessary.

“Well, I’m going to help you!” The mastiff occupied a special place in his heart. He would never forget the first time he had laid eyes on it, how small it had been, and how attached it was to him. He had raised it from when it was tiny, and in the Blood Immortal Legacy Tournament, it had protected him, and had even died for him, without the slightest hesitation. In its final moments, it had merely turned back for a moment in an attempt to lick his face, as doing so one more time would make it completely content.

Images from the past rose up in his mind. How could Meng Hao ever forget his loyal mastiff!?

As soon as he made his decision, the parrot looked at him in shock.

“Are you crazy!?!?” the parrot squawked. “That’s a renegade spirit, a mysterious entity of Heaven and Earth. It looks like this particular renegade spirit is dead, but it’s definitely something that you and the mastiff are no match for!”

“These people of the Windswept Realm can use this renegade spirit,” Meng Hao replied. “Well... why can’t I?” Without any further hesitation, he stamped his foot on the ground and began to sink down into the earth.

The parrot let out another squawk and, seemingly throwing caution to the wind, followed Meng Hao. The meat jelly blinked, and then also followed along.

“Dammit, possess a renegade spirit?” the parrot muttered. “Consume it? Take its place...? Crazy! Meng Hao, you’re crazy! That mastiff is crazy too! Well, fudge! Lord Fifth is also crazy!”

As the meat jelly followed along, it also yelled, “Lord Third is crazy too!”

Meng Hao sank down into the ground, heading in the direction he had probed earlier with divine sense.

Meanwhile, out in the Third Nation, the man in the Imperial robes sat cross-legged on the National Aura Mountain. All of a sudden, his eyes snapped open. He shot to his feet, his expression one of shock, disbelief, and then rage.

“Dammit!! The renegade spirit’s blood burial site has a spell formation that obscures divine sense. The secret entrance wouldn’t even be visible to someone in the Dao Realm. This Meng Hao... how did he discover it!!?”

The man’s face flickered, and without realizing it, he began to take a step forward. However, in almost the same moment, he stopped in place, eyes fixed on the crystal ball. His expression darkened.

“Kill him and bring me his head,” he ordered coldly. “Investigate how exactly he was able to see through to the blood burial site!”

In response to his orders, seventeen or so black-robed men appeared

nearby, all of whom clasped hands and said, "For the true Dao!"

With that, they turned and disappeared.

Down below the lands of the Third Nation, Meng Hao sped along, his expression ruthless, his eyes swirling with killing intent. He wasn't fully recovered from his injuries, but he could unleash about sixty to seventy percent of his cultivation base. Bursting with explosive speed, he went deeper and deeper.

Everything was pitch black, and there was no path that could be seen. Even sending out his divine sense, he saw nothing. Soon, he reached the location he had seen with the help of the parrot and meat jelly. He came to a stop.

"It should be around here...." he thought, eyes flickering. He looked over at the parrot, who muttered to itself for a moment before shining with radiant, multi-colored light that spread out in all directions. There up ahead, Meng Hao's could finally see the necropolis in his divine sense.

He looked at it and gritted his teeth. He knew that there was something strange going on in the Third Nation, and he was well-aware that his cultivation base had not yet been restored to its peak. Therefore, if he was going to fight... he needed to do it decisively.

He shot forward, causing muffled rumbling sounds to echo out underneath the lands. He pierced through the soil like an arrow, and when he emerged, he found that he wasn't inside the necropolis, but rather, had just slammed into a huge, invisible barrier.

The moment his body slammed into it, a backlash attack hit him, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He backed up, and everything began to shake. Cracks spread out on the surface of the barrier.

At the same time, the cultivators inside the necropolis all heard the rumbling sounds, and could sense the trembling. They clustered around the blood pits, and the ones slashing their arms to pour out blood all looked up with expressions of shock.

Simultaneously, the dozens of black-robed cultivators with obscured

faces, the ones standing guard, all rose to their feet and looked in the direction from which the sound echoed.

Outside of the necropolis, Meng Hao bellowed: “Parrot!”

The parrot seemed conflicted about what to do for a moment, but then it squawked and caused the light shining off of it to speed toward the barrier.

“Listen to Lord Fifth and OPEN UP!” it roared. The multi-colored light slammed into the barrier, instantly opening up a hole. Without the slightest hesitation, Meng Hao shot through the hole, stepping right into... the necropolis!

Everything happened incredibly quickly, which was how Meng Hao preferred to do things, to fight with decisiveness. Almost as soon as he entered the necropolis, cold snorts echoed out, and dozens of black-robed men flew into the air. All of them emanated the fluctuations of Ancient Realm cultivation bases. Their energy surged, and they joined forces in a unified attack, which sped through the air toward Meng Hao.

Almost as soon as Meng Hao began to charge forward, his face fell. “Dammit,” he thought, “the Windswept Realm isn’t limited to the Immortal Realm after all! Where did all these Ancient Realm cultivators come from!?!?”

He waved his right hand, sending the Essence of Divine Flame roaring out toward the dozens of black-robed cultivators.

A boom rang out, and blood oozed from Meng Hao’s mouth as he backed up. The dozens of black-robed cultivators also backed up a bit, but it only took a moment for them to once again close in.

Divine abilities and magical techniques blazed to life, joining together and then smashing toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as the Lightning Cauldron appeared. Thunder cracked, and electricity danced, but unfortunately, the transpositioning function didn’t work. Meng Hao’s heart sank. Putting the Lightning Cauldron away, he didn’t hesitate any longer to stride forward and meet

the incoming cultivators in battle.

“Screw off!” he roared, relying on the strength of his fleshly body to fight back against the divine abilities and magical techniques. He was like an explosive dragon, battering ahead, his right hand utilizing the Life-Extermination Fist, his left hand the Bedevilment Fist. Both fists struck out with mad, explosive power. Seven black-robed cultivators were blasted aside, blood spraying out of their mouths. Meng Hao shot like lightning toward the region with the blood pits.

“Halt!” a cold voice cried. The dozens of the black-robed cultivators once again moved to block Meng Hao’s path. Three of them waved their hands and, shockingly, Sea Dragons appeared, which roared toward Meng Hao.

“Daoist Magic of the Nine Seas God World !” Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he looked over at the black-robed men. Then he snorted coldly, performed an incantation gesture, and pointed out with his finger. Numerous mountains descended, linking together into a mountain range that smashed down toward the men. At the same time, he shot onward, getting closer to the blood pits. By this point he was about 300 meters away.

The entire necropolis trembled, and quite a few of the black-robed men coughed up blood. However, they continued to seek to block Meng Hao, almost as if they were deranged.

This time, they all performed the same incantation gesture, unleashing a bizarre magical technique.

“True Dao Advent!” As soon as the words left their mouths, a bizarre power of natural law sprang up. It transformed into a huge net-like cage that enveloped the surrounding area. Even as it sought to blanket Meng Hao, his face flickered and he transformed into a golden roc. As the net of natural law neared, he suddenly shot forward and slammed into the chest one of the black-robed men. A boom could be heard as the man exploded into bits. After shooting onward by about 150 meters, he returned to human form, lifted his right hand, and jabbed a finger at them.

Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

This time, what he was hexing was not a single person, but rather, a whole group of people, plus the net of natural law which was descending down onto him.

With the wave of a finger, all of the black-robed men felt themselves shudder to a stop. The huge net also stopped in place. However, Meng Hao had to pay a heavy price; he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Nonetheless, he didn't stop for even a moment, closing the remaining 150 meters in a flash, appearing next to one of the blood pits.

He waved his hand toward the air above the blood pit, and all of a sudden, all of the blood in the pit rose up and showered out in all directions. There at the bottom of the pit, an old man could now be seen.

Moments ago, he had been submerged in the blood, absorbing it, but now that he had been interrupted, he opened his eyes. Previously, his cultivation base had been at the Cauldron Seeking stage. However, as of this moment it was clear that it was climbing up. Now... he was in the Immortal Realm, despite the lack of any Door of Immortality appearing.

The old man let out a shout, and was about to start fighting Meng Hao, when Meng Hao snorted coldly. His right hand shot out with lightning speed in a clawing gesture, latching onto the man's arm and squeezing down hard. Cracking sounds were joined by a bloodcurdling scream as all the bones in the man's body were shattered. In the same moment, Meng Hao disappeared into the eyelet at the bottom of the pit.

As soon as he disappeared, booms filled the air, and countless divine abilities and Daoist magics slammed into the spot he had just occupied. The black-robed men surged with energy and began to speed over from all directions.

Meng Hao didn't wait for them to show up. He immediately transformed into a beam of light that shot through the eyelet, and then into the tunnel that led to the secret chamber below.

In almost that same instant, brilliant light filled the necropolis. The dozens of black-robed men exchanged glances, then transformed into beams of light that followed Meng Hao down into the blood pit and

beyond.

Chapter 1126: Hold the Tunnel!

At the same time, the other blood pits began to boil, as if they were being sealed. Clouds of bloody mist rose up into the air, which transformed into blood-colored swords that then hovered up above, radiating murderous auras.

The only pit with no blood sword was the pit Meng Hao had just vanished into, the one all the black-robed men were speeding toward.

Meng Hao moved with incredible speed. When he emerged from the blood pit, he found himself in a long, narrow tunnel that sloped downward into the secret chamber below. When he emerged into the chamber, blood-colored light stabbed dazzlingly into his eyes.

Inwardly, he was shocked at the indescribably evil aura that blasted against his face. It was as if countless miserable screams were echoing in his ears. Somehow, the voices seemed familiar, as if each and every one belonged to people he knew.

The effect wasn't limited to just voices. Myriad visual hallucinations appeared, and at the same time, his body felt like it was about to collapse, as if he were in the deepest depths of the Yellow Springs.

His heart began to pound, and his blood flowed in reverse. His face fell, and his cultivation base was almost thrown into chaos, to the point where he almost lost control of it. He quickly bit the tip of his tongue, using the surge of pain to gain clarity. Face pale, he immediately fell back toward the tunnel, and only when he reached it did he manage to stave off the sensations.

Furthermore, he had the strong premonition that even remaining at the entrance of the tunnel for too long would allow the evil aura to infect him completely, and he might even lose his cultivation base!

The feeling of intuition made his eyes widen. He quickly looked around, and saw the statues surrounding him. A Xuanwu turtle, a crane, and even a deer....

“Are they all... renegade spirits?!” he thought, eyes widening. Then his eyes came to rest on the blood-colored block of ice, and he saw what was sealed inside of it, the blood-colored bat.

All of the evil aura was emanating from that blood-colored ice block, and from the blood-colored bat therein. It... was the wellspring of evil in this place!

The parrot and meat jelly looked around, their faces flickering.

It was at this point that a howl echoed out from inside Meng Hao's bag of holding. The blood-colored mask flew out to hover in mid-air, rumbling and emanating blood-colored light. That blood-colored light indicated... that the mastiff had finally awakened.

It suddenly flew out into the open, turning to look at Meng Hao with a gaze of deep fondness. It was the same look it used to give him when it was small. In its world, Meng Hao was its master, its family, and the entire purpose of its life.

After looking at him, its eyes filled with determination, and it howled. Then it turned, transforming into a blood-colored beam that shot into the block of ice, where it began to attempt to possess the renegade spirit, to... take its place!!

If it failed, it would die!

But if it succeeded... from then on, it would be a renegade spirit!

If not for the fact that this renegade spirit was extremely weak, and perhaps had already died long ago, it would normally be impossible for the mastiff to succeed. And even in this state, no one could tell whether it had a chance.

Thankfully, it was a spirit born of blood, and therefore had the same origin as the Blood Bat, which gave it a bit better of a chance.

Rumbling echoed out, and the blood-colored ice block trembled. Strange howls could be heard echoing out, along with the sounds of a fierce battle that quickly filled the secret chamber. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he backed up swiftly. He was incapable of helping the mastiff

possess the renegade spirit, so the only thing he could do was protect it in this critical moment.

Whether or not it would have the good fortune to succeed depended completely on the mastiff, not Meng Hao.

Furthermore, he couldn't stay where he was; he had to leave. If he stayed any longer, he would be infected by the evil aura, and his cultivation base would begin to waste away.

Besides, he could hear the sound of the black-robed cultivators whistling through the tunnel behind him.

He took a deep breath and looked over at the parrot and meat jelly. The parrot instantly understood the look in his eyes.

It hesitated for a moment, then let out a squawk.

"Time to go for broke! Fudge! Lord Fifth is gonna go for it! Meng Hao, you owe me a favor, big time! Old Third, get over here and help me!" The parrot flapped its wings, causing numerous beams of multicolored light to fly out and cover over the blood-colored ice block.

The meat jelly didn't look happy about the situation, but it flew over and let the parrot grab it. They merged together, and then unleashed a bizarre Daoist magic that enabled them to assist the mastiff and increase its chances of success.

"Even with the help of Lord Fifth, its final success will be determined by its own good fortune!" the parrot roared.

"Many thanks," Meng Hao said. "You've done all that you can. The rest will be up to it.... As for me, I can't help much. But what I can do is stop the intruders, and prevent them from interfering!" He gave a final look at the block of ice into which the mastiff had disappeared, then turned and flew out of the secret chamber and into the tunnel.

Although the evil aura still had a significant influence on him, he could still forcibly resist it for a time. Of course, if Meng Hao could do that, so could the black-robed cultivators.

He wasn't willing to risk allowing them into the secret chamber itself. After all, he had no idea what actions they might take that could affect the mastiff, and even lead it to fail.

He cared too much about the mastiff, and therefore wouldn't make any decisions lightly. The only surefire option was holding the tunnel against the enemy!

The overall structure of the blood burial site was composed of two parts, the larger necropolis above, and the smaller secret chamber below. They were connected by this tunnel, which was Meng Hao's current location. Already, he could see the black-robed cultivators closing in on him.

Eyes flickering with killing intent, he didn't hesitate for a moment before going on the offensive.

"Mastiff, you've defended me over and over again. Now... it's my time to defend you!" he murmured. He rotated his cultivation base, and killing intent roiled out of him. He wasn't sure if the mastiff would succeed in possessing the renegade spirit, nor how long it would take to do so. But he did know that, at the moment, there was nowhere to retreat to. Nor did he have any desire or need to retreat.

He took a deep breath, causing his cultivation base and his Immortal meridians to surge with power. He was like a razor-sharp blade that instantly slashed into the attacking black-robed cultivators.

The tunnel wasn't very large, making it a challenge to unleash divine abilities and magical techniques. If Meng Hao were at his peak, then killing a few dozen people like this wouldn't be problematic at all. However, his cultivation base was only at about sixty percent of its normal level, making it difficult to fight.

It was a tough task, but he was an Echelon cultivator, and was in the Immortal Emperor Realm. He was someone that ordinary Ancient Realm experts couldn't easily touse with. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he attacked. A Blood Demon head materialized, and Essence of Divine Flame raged in all directions.

"You're not cultivators of the Windswept Realm!" he shouted, speeding

like lightning into the midst of the black-robed cultivators. His right hand shot out and latched onto the head of one of them, and he unleashed the Blood Demon Grand Magic. However, the power of absorption did nothing to the man.

The black robe was shredded to pieces, revealing a young man with the top of his head mangled and bloody. His face was pale as he cried out: "Our Daos are different! Your Dao is fabricated, and ours is real! You can't do anything to us! We live and die... for the true Dao!"

Laughing, he faded away into death.

Meng Hao's heart trembled. Then, another black-robed cultivator appeared in front of him, and he unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist. Rumbling could be heard as his opponent trembled and coughed up blood.

His cowl was destroyed, revealing his face. He was a middle-aged man who, shockingly, had a scale on his forehead! He was a Demonic cultivator!

"For the true Dao!" he cried, and then began to laugh maniacally before exploding into bits.

There was no change in facial expression whatsoever on the part of the other black-robed cultivators, nor did they speak. However, they attacked with increased ferocity, unleashing a biting wind that swept across Meng Hao. Suddenly, nine Sea Dragons roared toward him with gaping maws.

The more Meng Hao fought, the more shocked he was. He was getting a very strange feeling from these black-robed enemies.

Frowning, he summoned the Paragon Bridge, which instantly emanated crushing pressure, forcing the black-robed cultivators away. Meng Hao made a grasping motion, and the bone-tip spear appeared in his hand, which he stabbed toward the forehead of one of the black-robed cultivators. The cowl of the robe was thrown back, revealing a woman. Despite the fact that she was about to die, she showed no fear.

"For the true Dao!" she said coolly before exploding.

Meng Hao's hair was beginning to stand on end. If by this point he

didn't realize who these people were, then he didn't deserve to be the shrewd and cunning Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. As soon as he saw their cultivation bases, he immediately thought back to the "warning" given by Jian Daozi when they had first arrived in the Ninth Nation.

Back by the waterfall, after seeing the Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke in use, he had employed his Celestial Vision technique to observe the figure hidden behind the water.

He had begun to make speculations even at that time. Later, he saw all of the other cultivators sinking into their desires, and he suddenly became aware that it was possible to become lost within the Windswept Realm. Then he realized that... it was probably possible to stay there, to choose to not leave, to remain behind in the Windswept Realm, eternally lost therein.

Back then, he had considered that as a possibility. Now, facing these black-robed cultivators, Meng Hao received confirmation of his suspicions.

"You people... are cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm!" he roared. "You are from previous generations who came to the Windswept Realm and then lost yourself in your desires! In the end, you chose not to leave!!"

The black-robed cultivators didn't answer his accusation. Instead, they simply looked at him and said, "For the true Dao!"

Their voices were calm, and even seemed to contain some strange power that left Meng Hao in shock. Next, the black-robed cultivators shot forward in attack.

Booms rang out. Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot, and his clothes were spattered in the blood of his enemies. Meanwhile, up above in the necropolis, the air rippled as seventeen figures suddenly appeared. These were the people who had been dispatched by the man in the Imperial robes. Black cowls obscured their facial features, and from the ripples coming from the cultivation base of the man in the lead, he actually had ten extinguished Soul Lamps.

When the man spoke, his voice was incredibly ancient: “Hear the orders of the Emperor: kill Meng Hao; fiendish formation, return to your positions; resume the blood refinement!”

All of a sudden, all of the blood pits began to boil madly. The blood swords hovering over them flew over to the black-robed man, swirled around him, and then lined up into formation, after which they shot down into the tunnel toward Meng Hao.

Chapter 1127: You're Zong Wuya!

In almost the same moment that the blood-colored swords began to speed through the air, the bubbling blood in the ninety-eight pits suddenly shrank down, revealing ninety-eight cultivators.

Each and every one was an old man, and they were all radiating blood-colored light that seemed to burst with evil. Suddenly, their eyes opened, and what could be seen was not the clarity of normal eyes, but a murky, bloody glow. It was as if they weren't even conscious or aware of themselves, as if they had been transformed into puppets that merely followed orders or acted on instinct.

One of those old men was Jian Daozi, who no longer looked shrewd and intelligent like before. However, he didn't seem ancient and decrepit like before either, but instead seemed to burst with the vigor of his prime.

All of them began to breathe, and when they exhaled, the air of evil around them seemed to increase.

"Kill the intruder Meng Hao!" said the black-robed man, his voice hoarse and raspy. Instantly, the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators roared and flew into the air. Currently, their cultivation bases were no longer at the Cauldron Seeking stage; they had broken through from the Spirit Realm and into the Immortal Realm!

Although they had just broken through, the evil auras that surrounded them made them seem extremely eerie. Ninety-eight old men became beams of blood-colored light that sped through the air toward the pit where Meng Hao was located.

"You people too! Get in there!" the black-robed leader said to the other men who had come with him. One by one, they blurred away, vanishing.

The black-robed leader was the last one to do anything. It was impossible to see his face or his expression, but he seemed to be lost in thought for a moment before waving his hand and causing a black light to spread out. It spread out to cover the entire area, apparently sealing it.

Having accomplished this, the man began to slowly walk toward the pit where Meng Hao was located.

“Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation, the Ninth Mountain, the Ninth Sea....” he murmured. It was almost as if he were recalling something from the past. He sighed.

In the tunnel below the necropolis, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared as he unleashed a fist strike with both hands, killing the final members of the first wave of black-robed cultivators.

This battle was being fought with only sixty percent of his cultivation base. To defeat dozens of Ancient Realm opponents in such a way was difficult to say the least. Currently, he was coughing up blood, and his face was ashen. He suddenly looked up at the mouth of the tunnel, where a bright red glow could be seen. At that point, numerous red-colored flying swords could be seen screaming toward him, followed by the explosive, evil auras of the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators. As soon as their crimson eyes locked onto him, they howled like beasts and charged toward him in attack.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he realized that the flying swords were actually sentient. Both the swords and the cultivators seemed to be operating on the same source of power as the blood-colored ice block, except on a much weaker level.

Meng Hao frowned, and then let out a cold harrumph. The starstone in his left eye melted and spread out to cover his entire body, transforming him into a planet. He then flew toward the incoming flying swords, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

He shot forth like a meteor, taking up nearly the entire diameter of the tunnel. When he slammed into the flying swords, a huge boom echoed out, and they were sent spinning back toward the blood-colored cultivators. The entire tunnel was thrown into chaos. Although there were quite a few of the blood-colored cultivators, because the tunnel was so narrow, they were unable to scatter or dodge, and were immediately bombarded by the full force of Meng Hao’s One Thought Stellar

Transformation.

When it slammed into the men, blood erupted out, and all of them were ripped to shreds. However, it was at this point that the seventeen black-robed men arrived, incantation gestures flashing in their hands.

Waving their fingers toward Meng Hao, they roared: “Star-Slaughtering Dao of Lightning!”

As soon as the words left their mouths, the rumbling of thunder could be heard. Seventeen lightning bolts then shot out from the black-robed men, merging together in mid-air to form a single violet-colored lightning bolt!

As soon as it appeared, it emanated a mighty power of expulsion. It seemed powerful enough to reject and expel Heaven and Earth, to reject natural laws, to reject Essence!

At the same time, the world seemed to be rejecting and expelling it!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled; when he looked at the violet lightning, he got the feeling that this was something which shouldn’t even exist!

It was not in accord with Heaven and Earth, did not conform to natural laws, and was not harmonious with Essence. The instant it appeared, it seemed to be a Dao from another world. This was not something from the Windswept Realm, nor from the Mountain and Sea Realm. It was a thing of pure destruction, and when it shot toward Meng Hao and slammed into his One Thought Stellar Transformation, the planet cracked and exploded. Meng Hao appeared, blood spraying from his mouth as he was sent tumbling backward.

Simultaneously, time seemed to flow in reverse for all of the blood-colored cultivators who had just exploded. They rapidly reformed, as if they were eternally unkillable, after which they immediately shot forward in attack. Furthermore, each one grabbed a blood-colored sword, making them look exactly like sword cultivators.

Meng Hao had an unsightly expression on his face. Behind the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators were seventeen black-robed attackers.

Meng Hao felt threatened, threatened to the extreme, and what was causing it wasn't the cultivation bases of these people, but the divine abilities and magical techniques they used.

Almost in the same moment that the blood-colored cultivators closed on him, Meng Hao began to stride forward, unleashing the Seven God Steps. His power rose explosively, and was even amplified because of the constraints of the tunnel. It was when he took his sixth step that he balled his right hand into a fist and unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist.

Rumbling filled the air. This strike was filled with the power to exterminate all forms of life, and was backed by the full strength of his Ancient Realm fleshly body. A tempest sprang up, which ripped through the tunnel and slammed into the eternally unkillable blood-colored cultivators. They were instantly shredded into a bloody mist, and even as they began to reform, Meng Hao passed through them to close in on the seventeen black-robed cultivators.

The cultivators quickly began to perform incantation gestures. Any one of these people who faced Meng Hao alone on the battlefield would not be his match, not without some special Daoist magic. However, when they joined forces to attack, it was a different story.

As they performed their incantation gestures, violet light swirled around them and formed into a long, violet spear, which instantly stabbed toward Meng Hao.

It moved with incredible speed, causing intense ripples to emanate out, the same type that both rejected the world around it, and was likewise rejected.

However, this time, Meng Hao suddenly waved his right hand, causing dozens of black pods to fly out. Popping sounds could be heard as they transformed into blackpod imps, which screeched as they shot toward the black-robed cultivators, intent on possessing them.

The black-robed men possessed unique and bizarre Daoist magics, but they were still just ordinary living beings with souls, and were still in danger of being possessed. Furthermore, they were in the middle of

casting magic, and as such, the blackpod imps were easily able to enter their bodies.

The chances for the blackpod imps to successfully possess them were small, but actually, Meng Hao didn't need them to succeed. When they failed, they were ejected and made divine sense attacks.

The black-robed cultivators instantly began to tremble. At the same time, the Daoist magic they had unleashed, the terrifying violet spear, began to twist in mid-flight, and then simply dissipated.

In that same moment, Meng Hao flew through the air, right hand clenching and then smashing toward them as the Life-Extermination.

Just when his blow was about to land, a cold snort echoed out from behind the black-robed men, filled with an archaic air. A shadowy figure walked out, another man in a black robe, but taller than the others. This was their leader, the last man to join the fight.

He moved with incredible speed, and was soon directly in front of Meng Hao.

"The Emperor on the National Aura Mountain sensed that someone had broken into this place. Meng Hao, you shouldn't have done this. And by the way, that is not the proper usage of the Life-Extermination Fist." As the man spoke, he clenched his right hand into a fist, and suddenly, a will of life-extinction exploded out in the form of a single punch.

Meng Hao's eyes went wide. He found the man's words to be extremely strange, but had no time to think about why. The two of them sailed through the tunnel toward each other until their fists slammed together.

A deafening boom echoed out, causing everything to shake. The necropolis itself seemed like it might collapse; cracking sounds rang out as the tunnel began to grow unstable. Blood oozed out of Meng Hao's mouth as he was sent tumbling backward by the force of the blow.

The black-robed man was also shaken, and fell back several paces. When he looked up, his black cowl still covered his face, making it impossible to make out his features. However, his eyes shone brightly with

bizarre light. He began to walk forward again, clenching his hand into a fist and unleashing another attack.

“Bedevilment!” he said coolly, his voice hoarse. He punched out, and a wildly domineering air rose up. It was as if this man were the only important thing in the world. He seemed to enter a state of Bedevilment in which he would unleash a blow capable of sacrificing everything.

Meng Hao’s face fell; the injuries he had sustained earlier had not recovered, causing him to be at a severe disadvantage. However, when he saw the black-robed man unleashing the Bedevilment Fist, he stopped moving backward and instead unleashed his own Bedevilment Fist.

A huge boom rang out when their fists met, and everything shook violently. The necropolis began showing even more obvious signs of collapsing than before.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth, and he was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut. He was pushed back so far that soon he was near the entrance to the secret chamber. He was panting as he looked up at the black-robed old man. The man’s cultivation base fluctuations put him at ten extinguished Soul Lamps. Furthermore, the explosive level of his body cultivation gave Meng Hao the sensation that this man was even stronger than Dao-Heaven!

The old man strode forward, unleashing another punch. “God Slaying!”

In that exact same moment, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly flickered, and he roared, “You’re Zong Wuya!” 1

In response to the words, the old man trembled. Meng Hao took advantage of that distraction to take a deep breath and unleash his own fist strike.

“God Slaying!”

It was at that point that, in the secret chamber below, the mastiff let out a howl. It was a howl filled with determination, as if the mastiff had reached a critical juncture in the possession process, and was going all out. It would be reborn and replace the renegade spirit, or die in the

process!

*

1. Previous times Zong Wuya was mentioned: Chapter 1052, 1082, 1083.

Chapter 1128: True Dao?

Both Meng Hao and the black-robed man unleashed the God-Slaying Fist!

It was the last of the three body cultivation fists, which combined the will of extermination, the voluntary self-immolation for the sake of bedevilment, and materialized the will of slaughtering gods. It was... the God-Slaying Fist!

Furthermore, because Meng Hao had the accumulation of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, it also had some of the will of Heaven in it, making it the absolute peak fist attack of the Immortal Emperor Realm.

As for the black-robed man, his God-Slaying Fist came from having experienced countless bloody battles. He had honed his killing will to the extent that apparently... he had actually killed Gods, and fused that will into his fist strike. When he struck out, Heaven and Earth crumbled, and a massive wind kicked up.

The two of them shot through the tunnel like lightning, their fists on a direct collision course.

A massive, shocking rumbling sound shook everything, and that was before their fists even touched. The tunnel appeared to be on the verge of being ripped to shreds, as if it were being torn apart by two enormous hands.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, but his killing intent was already raging. Roaring, he pushed forward until he and the black-robed old man actually made contact.

This was a God-Slaying Fist going directly up against another God-Slaying Fist!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!

The area around them exploded. Massive vibrations ripped through Meng Hao, and blood sprayed out of his mouth yet again. An indescribable and yet familiar force surged back toward him from the black-robed old

man. It flowed up his right arm and then filled his entire body, which seemed as if it were about to explode.

The two Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps in Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and then emanated brilliant light. His Eternal stratum surged to life, and his cultivation base exploded with energy, all of it to counteract the God-Slaying power.

Amidst intense rumbling, blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The massive power shoved him backward relentlessly before he finally ground to a halt in front of the entrance to the secret chamber.

However, the black-robed old man was shaken as well. Blood oozed out of his mouth as he staggered backward seven or eight paces. When he looked up, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he hunched over like a bow ready to unleash an arrow. Then he burst into movement, flying through the tunnel at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, he was closing in on the entrance to the secret chamber, where Meng Hao was.

As he neared, he could see into the secret chamber; the parrot and meat jelly were in full view, as was the blood-colored ice block.

"So you're here for that," he said slowly, flicking his sleeve. Almost instantly, light streamed out of his sleeve, forming into a magical symbol which sped past Meng Hao and headed toward the blood-colored ice block.

Meng Hao began to pant, and his eyes glittered with a cold light. He waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex toward the incoming old man.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex transformed into invisible threads which instantly bound the old man up. He lurched to a halt, but after a moment, his body began to expand, and he forced himself free of the Hexing magic.

In the instant that he did, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture and unleashed a Daoist magic onto the flying blood-colored magical symbol. Before it could get close to the blood-colored ice block, it dissipated.

The old man's eyes glittered, and he suddenly spoke in an archaic voice: "Daos can be classified as true and false. There are fabricated Daos, and genuine Daos.... My Dao, is from outside the Mountains and Seas, a Dao above Daos!"

As he spoke, he traced a circle in the air in front of him with his right hand which, when completed, roiled with an air of chaos.

An intense power of expulsion appeared yet again. Simultaneously, a beam of light shot out from inside the circle; it was a violet light, something that seemed capable of smashing all magics, and it sped directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's Daoist magic was instantly crushed, and dissipated without a sound. Then the violet light began to fade. However, before it disappeared completely, it transformed into a violet hand that grabbed toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Meng Hao fought back with all the power he could muster. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he fell back. Behind him, cracks were spreading out over the blood-colored ice block, as a faint roar could be heard from within; an urgent, enraged roar.

As he fell back, Meng Hao's expression turned vicious. Throughout his years of practicing cultivation, he had faced many deadly situations. Most of the time, he was able to sweep through them and come out on top. It wouldn't be proper to call him invincible, but you could say that very few opponents were a match for him.

After arriving in the Windswept Realm, he had likewise swept forward, virtually unstoppable. He had fought Han Qinglei, Lin Cong, and had even killed another Echelon cultivator. But then he had met the intensely powerful Dao-Heaven, and his previously unstoppable momentum faltered.

Then he arrived in the Third Nation, and during the course of the battle had been forced into his current predicament. Because of his pride and self-confidence, he was feeling a bit overwhelmed, even stifled. It almost felt unfair.

“I’m in the Echelon. I’m Meng Hao, Crown Prince of the Fang Clan!

“In my life of cultivation, I have experienced much enlightenment, and have benefited from a lot of good fortune. Even Dao-Heaven will only maintain his edge on me for a short time. I will defeat... everyone! Even you, Zong Wuya!” Meng Hao’s eyes were shot with blood as he ceased any thoughts of retreating, and instead began to charge the black-robed old man.

As he did, his body flickered, and he transformed into a huge golden roc which flashed like a streak of gold toward the old man, and then slashed at him with vicious claws.

The black-robed old man sighed, once again tracing a circle in the air and pushing it forward. Violet flames burned, transforming it into a ring of fire that soared toward Meng Hao.

“Your Dao is a fabricated Dao,” the old man said coolly. “There’s no need to try to put on airs.” In the mostly destroyed tunnel behind him, the blood-colored cultivators and the other black-robed old men were approaching. Meng Hao was now completely trapped, without any avenue of escape available.

“Daos are inner paths of the heart, Zong Wuya,” Meng Hao said. “How could they possibly be categorized as fabricated or genuine?! How close-minded!” The golden roc sped toward the violet ring of fire. When they slammed into each other, the violet flames flickered brightly, and the Dao of Meng Hao’s golden roc body seemed to be dispelled. The golden roc rapidly vanished, and Meng Hao returned to human form, his face ashen as he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

He was shocked to find that he was incapable of overpowering this type of violet Daoist magic.

“When a fabricated Dao encounters a true Dao,” the old man said, “the fabricated Dao becomes more illusory, and the true Dao becomes more corporeal.” He drew another circle, and it was once again violet. However, this time there were no violet flames; instead, it was a violet ring of lightning.

Rumbling could be heard as the two violet rings shot toward Meng Hao.

“Do you understand?” the old man asked Meng Hao.

Cracking sounds could be heard coming from the red block of ice behind Meng Hao in the secret chamber. More cracks had spread out across its surface, and the aura of Immortality was emanating out, and growing stronger. The roaring coming from inside was becoming more distinct, and more urgent.

A critical juncture had arrived. Determination filled Meng Hao’s eyes as he raised his right hand, unleashing another God-Slaying Fist. This time, he seemed to be holding absolutely nothing back. Despite being seriously injured, he let out three successive punches.

The first two were sent against the two violet rings, and the third one was directed at the floor of the tunnel!

Intense booms rang out. The God-Slaying Fist was the most explosive power he could unleash with his fleshly body, and although the violet rings could cause Daos to vanish, they could do nothing about fleshly body strength.

The two violet rings were instantly shattered by Meng Hao’s two fist strikes. As for his third fist strike, when it struck the tunnel, everything began to collapse. Massive amounts of dust billowed out, completely obscuring Meng Hao’s vision.

At the same time, Meng Hao dashed backward into the secret chamber!

Flickering light filled the chamber as it was apparently affected by the collapse of the tunnel outside. However, nothing had been significantly damaged. The statues were still there, and the blood-colored ice block was now completely blurry. The blood-colored bat was no longer visible inside; the only thing that could be seen was a turbid red haze.

Numerous cracks spread out across the surface of the ice block, and an intense Immortal Realm aura was emanating out. In fact, by this point, that aura was at the peak of the Immortal Realm. The howling grew more anxious, as if the mastiff were worried about Meng Hao’s safety.

The parrot and meat jelly were completely focused on assisting the mastiff in the possession process. They could spare no attention for Meng Hao, nor could they afford to let anything disturb their work.

When Meng Hao entered the secret chamber, more cracking sounds could be heard from the block of ice, and the aura grew stronger.

He began to pant. He had no time to examine the situation closely; time was of the essence. Because of all the chaos caused by the collapse of the tunnel, he had managed to buy a little bit of time. His second Nirvana Fruit appeared in his palm; due to his injured state, had been unwilling to absorb it again. However, he currently didn't seem to have any other options.

Taking a deep breath, he lifted the Nirvana Fruit up and pushed it down onto his forehead. Immediately, rumbling sounds filled his body, and his energy spiked. He grew larger, and the azure light of the Allheaven Immortal Realm erupted around him.

Soon, the entire secret chamber was filled with the azure light, and his energy was rocketing up.

It was at this point that, back in the collapsed tunnel, the black-robed leader brushed the dust and rubble off of his clothing and began to stride forward in an attempt to reach the secret chamber.

Ten breaths of time passed, and then a massive boom could be heard. Dust flew out in all directions as the black-robed old man burst into the secret chamber in a flash of light.

In that exact moment, Meng Hao looked up. He was surrounded by azure light, and was now in the Allheaven Immortal Realm. His eyes were filled with the intense desire to fight; he took a step forward and once again unleashed the God-Slaying Fist!

That fist was now vastly more powerful than the version he had used only moments ago. Originally, the black-robed old man hadn't paid much attention to it, but now, his face fell, and he stopped in place. Then, he also unleashed the God-Slaying Fist.

A huge boom rang out as the two of them slammed into each other in midair. This time, Meng Hao didn't fall back. The one who fell back was the black-robed old man, his expression that of shock. At the same time, Meng Hao let out a roar like that of an explosive dragon as he charged into battle.

Once again, he relied on that same fighting style that he usually used; he seized the initiative and began to domineer his opponent!

Chapter 1129: The Blood Mastiff Flies!

The black-robed man's face flickered as he was once again sent falling back. The intense level of power Meng Hao now wielded had struck fear even in Dao-Heaven's heart. The black-robed man might have a powerful fleshly body and bizarre Daoist magic, but fighting with Meng Hao in his current state caused him to feel immense pressure.

Rumbling filled the air, and blood sprayed out of the man's mouth. Even as he fell back, Meng Hao closed in for another fist strike.

The man's eyes went wide, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture.

"True Dao!" he barked. A blinding sea of violet light erupted in front of him, which became a gigantic violet hand that flew toward Meng Hao.

"Smash all magics? Dispel all Daos?" Meng Hao said with a cold harrumph. He performed an incantation gesture, and the Essence of Divine Flame appeared. Backed by the power of the Allheaven Immortal Realm, the Essence of Divine Flame spread out in all directions with terrifying power. Rumbling sounds could be heard as it slammed into the enormous violet hand.

This time, no Dao dispelling effect occurred. The violet hand was incapable of banishing the Divine Flame, and could only resist it. Rumbling could be heard as the Divine Flame began to fade. At the same time, the violet hand collapsed.

The remaining Divine Flame continued on toward the black-robed old man, instantly engulfing him. The man's face fell, and he rapidly fell back in retreat. However, the blood-colored cultivators and other black-robed old men behind him were not so fast.

In the blink of an eye, the divine flame swept over and enveloped them. Miserable shrieks rang out. Despite possessing undying bodies, the blood-colored cultivators were destroyed nonetheless.

As for the black-robed men, they let out bloodcurdling screams as they

were transformed into ash.

The leader of the black-robed men was completely shocked as he fell back. He performed another incantation gesture, causing boundless violet light to appear. It transformed into a series of Daoist magics and divine abilities, which then strung together to form a huge net which shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao waved his hand, letting loose another divine ability which shattered the huge net. The black-robed man's face fell. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and he fell back again. Meng Hao was just about to go on the offensive again, when all of a sudden, his entire body spasmed beyond his control. Intense pain radiated from his forehead as the Nirvana Fruit fruit emerged and fell down. He caught it, but as he did, an intense wave of weakness swept through him.

He coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered back a bit. He now had no offensive power left whatsoever. He felt empty, and he immediately began to simply float down toward the ground.

Seeing this, the black-robed old man quickly shot toward Meng Hao; he was on him in the blink of an eye. Shockingly, the attack he used was yet again the God-Slaying Fist.

Meng Hao smiled bitterly. He had no more energy left, and his vision dimmed. Exhaustion filled him, and despite the deadly situation, there was nothing he could do to stimulate himself.

As the black-robed man closed in, a roar of rage suddenly echoed out from within the blood-colored ice block. The ice suddenly shattered, sending chunks flying in all directions. A blood-red streak shot through the air, instantly covering Meng Hao to protect him from the old man's fist strike.

A boom rang out, and the old man was visibly rocked. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and the backlash sent him flying backward. At the same time, a muffled grunt could be heard from within the blood-red light. Next, the blood-colored light turned into a mist, within which could suddenly be seen the mastiff's enormous head. Scowling viciously, it

lunged toward the black-robed man with gaping maw, as if to consume him.

The man's face fell, and he retreated further, avoiding the attack. However, more blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth.

"Possession!" the old man cried. "You... you were using this beast to possess the Blood Bat?!?!"

Meng Hao panted as the awakened mastiff swirled around him, pouring life force energy into him, reviving him. When he saw the red mist around him, and the mastiff's head, a familiar sensation filled him, and he couldn't help but smile.

"It interrupted the fusion process to save you," said the parrot. "It will take some luck to find another opportunity like it."

The parrot and meat jelly looked exhausted. After glancing at Meng Hao for a moment, they streaked back into his bag of holding.

The mastiff now emanated powerful fluctuations of the Ancient Realm; it was clearly on par with a human cultivator with ten extinguished Soul Lamps.

It could have been even more powerful; opportunities to possess renegade spirits were extremely rare in the universe. However, Meng Hao was its master, its family. The only reason it wanted to get more powerful was to protect him. Therefore... if Meng Hao fell into a deadly crisis, then it would not choose to continue to power up. After all, if it lost its master, its life would have no meaning.

It was a loyal dog, and it was entirely correct to say that it lived for Meng Hao!

A gentle light could be seen in Meng Hao's eyes as he looked at the mastiff, which threw its head back and roared. Cracking sounds could be heard from inside the mist, which then coalesced to form the mastiff's body. Fierce bone spurs stuck out all over it, and its teeth were razor sharp. It was blood-red, like a gigantic and terrifying wild beast. Furthermore, it now sported two enormous, blood-colored wings!

The mastiff looked more fierce than ever, like some sort of fiendish blood god. Its eyes radiated a seemingly infinite coldness and ferocity toward the world. It was as if, to the mastiff, there was no such thing as good or evil, right or wrong. There was only... its master!

It looked fierce, brutal, and cold. Any person who lacked courage would instantly be terrified just by looking at it.

Even many of the most ferocious creatures in existence would tremble in fear at a single glance.

There was only one person who this terrifying mastiff would allow to sit on its back, who it would wag its tail for. That person was... the person who had raised it from the time it was small. Meng Hao.

He was the one and only person who could do such things!

Meng Hao sat down on the mastiff's back, and it roared. It flapped its wings, then flew up toward the surface of the land above. Everything trembled around it, collapsing, leaving behind an enormous crater as it emerged into the sky.

As it flew out, it apparently broke through some type of seal which had been in place over the area. At the same time, it grew even larger. Soon it was 300 meters long, and as it flew, it let out an astonishing roar that caused everything to shake, and caused a huge wind to spring up.

It was at this point that an enraged cry could be heard rising up into the sky. The sound came from none other than the top of the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain.

"Kill him!" roared the man in the imperial robes. "Get that blood crystal back!"

In the moment that the mastiff flew up into the air, he was able to sense that the blood-colored ice block had shattered. He also sensed that the blood-colored bat had been consumed, and that as a result... the mastiff had taken its place!

As his roar echoed out, numerous incredibly powerful black-robed cultivators appeared around him. They almost instantly transformed into

beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

The strongest were the three black-robed men in the lead position, especially the center-most of that group. He wore the same black robe as the others, but his face was not covered. He was a middle-aged man with no hair, and a tranquil expression that seemed to embody wisdom.

As soon as they took to flight, they emanated incredible pressure. When Meng Hao felt it, his face flickered. Patting the mastiff, he said, "Come on, let's go!"

Immediately, the mastiff threw its head back and roared again. Then it transformed into a beam of blood-colored light that shot off into the distance.

As time passed, more black-robed cultivators converged on the area. At the same time, the black-robed man that Meng Hao had fought underground emerged from within the rubble of the crater. Instead of joining the groups of other black-robed men, he flew up toward the bald cultivator with the expression of wisdom. Shockingly... he merged into that man!

In the blink of an eye, the two became one. The middle-aged man's appearance then changed. He looked older, and yet, a Quasi-Dao aura suddenly erupted from him!!

Although he wasn't truly in that Realm, he was close enough to be considered a Quasi-Dao expert!

"Meng Hao," the man murmured. "Ninth Mountain. Ninth Sea...." His eyes flickered with reminiscence, and he sighed lightly. Then he shot through the air in pursuit, followed by all the other black-robed men.

The incredible speed with which he moved ensured that he quickly left the other black-robed cultivators behind. He was like an arrow that pierced through the sky with unbelievable speed.

As for the mastiff, it was moving so fast that it left afterimages behind as it shot through the Third Nation toward the central temple region.

Meng Hao sat on its back, consuming medicinal pills, focusing all his

efforts on recovery. His Eternal stratum was hard at work as he took advantage of every moment to try to reach the highest level of power possible. Without being at that peak of his power, there were simply too many dangers within the Windswept Realm.

He could also sense the intense killing aura that was approaching him from behind.

Thanks to the mastiff's incredible speed, they quickly left the Third Nation and entered the region of the central temple.

That was also the location of the grand War of Nine Nations, and the cultivators from the various Nine Mountains and Seas. Although there weren't many people left, everyone had chosen to remain in this area. They knew that this was the area that, although it seemed dangerous, was actually the safest place to be.

Anyone who returned to the Nation from whence they came could be dragged into the fierce fighting of the Echelon cultivators, which was definitely the most dangerous possible situation to be in.

Furthermore, all of the cultivators had come to the realization that the central temple region was the most suitable location in which to control their desires.

As soon as Meng Hao entered the area, the cultivators and mortals engaged in deadly fighting all looked up at the enormous mastiff, and gasped in shock.

"What is that?!?!"

"Heavens! How could a blood-colored beast like that show up in the Windswept Realm?!?"

Soon, the shocked mortals and cultivators realized that someone was sitting atop the mastiff.

"Look, on it's back... it's a person!!"

"It's Meng Hao!" Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu were in the central temple region, and they almost immediately caught sight of the mastiff, and Meng

Hao on its back.

It was at this point that the bald Quasi-Dao cultivator let out a slight sigh as he left the Third Nation and entered the central temple region.

“It’s been a long time... since I was here,” he murmured softly.

Chapter 1130: Muddling the Dao!

In the instant that the bald cultivator entered the central temple region, Meng Hao opened his eyes and looked over his shoulder at the man.

The man's gaze also came to fall upon Meng Hao, and he smiled.

It was a gentle smile, filled with seemingly boundless warmth. It caused the wounds of all the mortals down below to begin to heal. Even the cultivators trembled as they felt their qi and blood flourishing.

The man proceeded forward, smiling, to appear directly in front of Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao," he said, "you managed to commandeer the blood crystal and flee the Third Nation. It seems you have the qualifications to be awakened. There's no need for you to remain in this fabricated world. Come with me to see the true Heaven and Earth. Then you will understand... the truth."

The mastiff halted in midair, growling and glaring vigilantly at the bald cultivator. There was something familiar about this man's aura, and something terrifying and stifling.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he looked back silently at the man. He seemed to possess no killing intent whatsoever, and the words he had just spoken were so strange that Meng Hao was somewhat befuddled.

Down below, the mortals had ceased combat, and were looking up at the black-robed man floating there in the sky. All of sudden, people began to drop to their knees and kowtow. Soon all of the soldiers of the various Nations were on their knees.

The cultivators from the various Mountains looked on with flickering expressions. This bald cultivator filled their hearts with fear, and they could sense that he overflowed with the violence of a raging sea.

However, that ferocity also seemed to be under control. The only thing he revealed was calm.

Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu felt their hearts trembling. The exchanged a

vigilant glance, and then began to back up slowly.

“I don’t want to fight with you again,” the man said, looking at Meng Hao with a sincere expression. “Therefore... just come with me. What do you say? Follow, and you will face no danger to your life. In fact, you’ll even be able to acquire some good fortune.

“Because of the matter of the blood crystal, your Dao and our Dao are now similar. What is yours, is ours. There is no difference between the two. You have no reason to fear.”

Meng Hao’s eyes widened. As soon as the man used the word ‘again,’ he realized what was going on. After looking at the man closely, his heart began to pound.

“You’re... Zong Wuya!” Meng Hao said slowly.

“What you fought before was simply my clone,” Zong Wuya said softly. “This is the real me, Junior Brother Meng Hao.”

A complex expression appeared on Meng Hao’s face. He could sense the incredible pressure of the man’s cultivation base, and knew that he couldn’t fight him. Even in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, it would still be difficult for him to contend with a Quasi-Dao expert.

Meng Hao remembered seeing Zong Wuya’s name on the golden gate stone stele in the Nine Seas God World. Before he had gained enlightenment of the third body cultivation fist strike, Zong Wuya’s name had been listed in 1st place.

Later, he had investigated a bit, only to find out that there was no Zong Wuya anywhere in the Nine Seas God World.

After a moment silence, Meng Hao said, “You came to the Windswept Realm, but never left. You decided to stay behind, just like all the other black-robed cultivators. All of you are Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators who came here throughout the years but chose to remain. Obviously you didn’t succumb to your desires. Why did you stay?”

“Some people choose to stay because they get lost in their desires,” Zong Wuya said calmly. “Others stay to pursue their obsessions. As for me, I

chose to stay... because of the true Dao.”

“True Dao?” Meng Hao asked.

Zong Wuya looked at him and smiled. Then he waved his hand, causing a gentle wind to spring up. It carefully picked up everyone down on the ground below, even Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu. “I'd like to discuss the Dao with my young friend here. Ladies and gentlemen, please give us some privacy. Many thanks to you.” The wind then carried them all to a location off in the distance.

With that, Zong Wuya floated down to the ground and sat down cross-legged, then looked up at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned. After a moment of thought, he floated down to sit across from Zong Wuya.

A gleam of reminiscence appeared in Zong Wuya's eyes as he slowly said, “Meng Hao, in your opinion, what is true, and what is false?”

“True and false are like inside and out,” Meng Hao replied calmly. “Without what is true, that which is false cannot exist. However, as I mentioned to you earlier, when it comes to Daos... there is no such thing as true and false!”

“Well then, in your opinion, what is a Dao?” Zong Wuya's expression was placid, but the reminiscence in his eyes grew even stronger as they continued to discuss the Dao.

Meng Hao didn't need to think about the answer. He immediately responded: “The Dao is the obsession in your heart, the path that you choose to follow.”

“In that case, what is your Dao?”

“Freedom and independence!” Meng Hao said, his voice filled with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

“Freedom. Independence....” Smiling, Zong Wuya shook his head.

“What is freedom? And similarly, what is independence? Is freedom being free from all restrictions? Is independence an absence of all

restraint? As you sit here in front of me, Heaven and Earth restrict you. The entire world restrains you.

“Look up, and you will see the sky. The sky weighs down on you. Beyond the Windswept Realm is the void, the Heavens. There are 33 Realms, all of them are also weighing down on you. Beyond those 33 Realms, are even more Realms and worlds. All of them are also pressing down on you.” Although Zong Wuya spoke calmly, his words were as incisive as the stabs of a sword. They even seemed to be filled with a strange power, as if every word he spoke were completely and utterly correct.

As his words entered Meng Hao’s ears, he trembled. He wasn’t sure why, but he suddenly thought back to the image painted by Shui Dongliu back on Planet South Heaven all those years ago, and had to ask himself if what existed at the top of that painting was actually the sky, or not...? 1

“What about morality and principles,” Zong Wuya continued, his wording growing more cutting. “Are they not restraints? Can you ignore them? Can you trample on them? Where does your freedom come from? Where does your independence come from?” His eyes glittered, and seemed to contain matchless wisdom.

“You are weak,” he said, staring Meng Hao in the eye. “When you meet powerful people, you have no freedom, nor any independence, not unless you are the most powerful person. However, the starry sky is wide, and the Heavens are vast. Perhaps when you think you are the most powerful person in existence, wouldn’t you always be wondering if there might be other people over the horizon who also view themselves to be at the ultimate pinnacle?”

“I—” Meng Hao was about to reply, but was cut off by Zong Wuya.

“You have an incorrect understanding of the Dao. Your freedom is not a Dao, it is an obsession of yours. And an obsession... is likewise not a Dao!”

His words echoed about, causing Meng Hao’s mind to reel.

“This is actually what I wanted to explain to you. Do you know what the true Dao is? It doesn’t matter if it’s you or other people, in all of the Mountain and Sea Realm... there is only one Dao. No matter what

enlightenment or thought process goes into the Daos of others, what they pursue, are all fabricated Daos.

“Therefore, your Daoist magics and divine abilities, when faced against the true Dao that I follow, will be dispelled. That is because, when faced with what is true, fabrications will naturally fade away.”

Meng Hao was panting as he looked at Zong Wuya, as if his heart was filled with waves of shock. Meng Hao had never heard words like this spoken before, words that seemed designed to subvert everything he believed in.

Zong Wuya continued: “The life you live, your thoughts, your words, the things you have heard, the enlightenment you have achieved, are all falsehoods. None of it is real; it is all counterfeit. Meng Hao, reject the Echelon, and come experience the REAL world. I will take you, and together we will leave this place. You can contemplate the true Dao, and then you will understand... what the real world is!

“Don’t tell me you have never considered why Immortals are classified as true and false? False Immortals reach Immortal Ascension by being enlightened regarding the true Immortality of others!

“What about the Ancient Realm? It’s the same!

“And the Dao Realm...? Also the same!” Zong Wuya eyes shone with a strange light. Deep inside, that look of reminiscence grew stronger, almost as if he weren’t speaking to Meng Hao, but to himself.

It was almost as if these were words being spoken to him by someone else in the past, words that had stirred his heart, that had changed his life. Now, he was in the position occupied by whoever that person had been years ago. He was speaking shocking words to change Meng Hao’s life, and in the process... strengthening his own resolve!

“You live in a Paragon’s world, and that Paragon was not the Paragon who founded the Echelon, Sea Dream. No, he was the most powerful entity in the Paragon Immortal Realm, Paragon Nine Seals!

“You live in the world he created, and therefore, all of your

enlightenment, has been regarding HIS Dao. In fact, the only Dao of the Mountain and Sea Realm is HIS Dao!

“Do you know what the end result of all this will be? I’ll tell you, Meng Hao. The end result is that all of you, every single cultivator in the Mountain and Sea Realm, are all just fuel, fuel being used to power the resurrection of Paragon Nine Seals!

“In the end... he will be resurrected, and all of you... will lose yourselves for all eternity. You will become his blood, his bones, and all the other parts of his body!

“Perhaps if you become powerful enough, you might even become one of his fingers!

“Therefore, that is why I say that all of those Daos are mere fabrications. All those Daos are falsehoods. Only if you leave this place will you ever gain enlightenment of your own Dao. Then, you can understand... what it actually feels like to acquire the true Dao. Then you will clearly understand... what the Dao is!

“Give up your fleshly body, and forsake your place in the Echelon. I will take your soul to experience the baptism of tribulation. It will wipe away that which seals you to the Mountain and Sea Realm. In the outside world, there are people who have already prepared a new fleshly body for you, a true fleshly body. Enter that fleshly body, break away from that which is fabricated, and you can become... a real person!

“Only at that time will you be qualified to truly pursue your freedom and independence.

“At that time you will see the true world. There, you will see the true starry sky, not the sun and moon which are mere materializations of Nine Seals’ eyes. The magic there is not the magic of the five elements, which are nothing more than the manifestation of Nine Seals’ five organs. The rivers and seas there are not made from Nine Seals’ blood, and it is not a Mountain and Sea Realm formed out of Nine Seals’ magical item.

“Most importantly of all, you will gain enlightenment that is NOT the Dao and will of Nine Seals, NOT the natural law of the Mountains and

Seas, NOT the Dao of the Mountains and Seas!

“Meng Hao, why do you refuse to open your eyes! In the real world, the most radiant symbol is none other than the butterfly! In the real world, the lands flow with the true Dao! Gain enlightenment of the true Dao, and you can even become a Paragon!

“Leave this place with me. Come with me... to experience the true Dao.”
When Zong Wuya finished speaking, his eyes were shining with even more intensity than before.

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1. The scene in which Shui Dongliu painted a picture and then asked Meng Hao about it was in chapter 208.

Chapter 1131: Xue'er!

Meng Hao's mind seemed to be reeling. Zong Wuya's voice apparently contained some sort of bizarre power, something that could interfere with Meng Hao's mental faculties, leaving him panting. Zong Wuya's words were mesmerizing, and he seemed powerless to extricate himself.

"The true Dao...." he murmured, his expression blank. He seemed to be at a complete loss, as if he had lost all powers of reasoning and judgment. It was as if one part of him was filled with everything he knew about the Mountain and Sea Realm, while at the same time, everything he believed had been turned on end by Zong Wuya.

Two trains of thought seemed to run through his mind, and they were currently battling back and forth.

Meng Hao trembled, panting, his eyes shot with blood.

"Come with me," Zong Wuya said. "Our plan is already underway, and nobody can stop us.... Come with me, and we can go to the true world. With new fleshly bodies, we can thoroughly awaken.

"Then you will understand that everything I've told you... is true. Then you will truly be able to feel... the existence of the true Dao."

Although some people could see Meng Hao and Zong Wuya chatting, no one could hear the words being spoken. Zong Wuya had ensured that all the sound was blocked.

It was at this point that a large group of black-robed men appeared, flying toward them from the direction of the Third Nation. Zong Wuya gave them a look, and they immediately stopped in place at the border. They hovered there waiting, none of them taking even a single move forward.

Meng Hao looked up at Zong Wuya. It seemed like a struggle, but he managed to say, "I need some time to think."

"I understand that you can't make a decision about something like this in such a short time," Zong Wuya said softly. "Well, I've explained the

truth to you. The decision is yours to make....” He looked at Meng Hao, and deep in his eyes were complicated emotions, and hope, although no one would be able to detect those things. Perhaps what he hoped for was that Meng Hao would be like him, that he would pursue the true Dao. Or perhaps he was thinking something else....

Only he himself knew.

“I’ll give you some time to think. However, during that time, you are not to leave the region of the central temple itself. Meng Hao... please do take care of yourself.” With a final piercing look at Meng Hao, he turned back toward the Third Nation.

Meng Hao stared in shock, not quite able to wrap his mind around Zong Wuya’s actions, or why he had left just like that.

As Zong Wuya turned and floated up into the air, his gaze happened to pass across the border connecting the Sixth Nation and the central temple region. His gaze casually lingered for a moment on one particular soldier in the Sixth Nation’s army. That soldier was trembling, seemingly having forgotten all about the desperate fighting.

Zong Wuya looked away and sighed. Once again, the complicated emotions, and the hope, rose up in his eyes.

As he made his way off, he murmured, “Meng Hao, what decision will you make...?”

Meng Hao watched him leaving, and when he saw Zong Wuya look over, he automatically looked over toward the Sixth Nation as well. However, he saw nothing unusual. Before Zong Wuya could get too far away, Meng Hao suddenly called after him, “What if... everything that YOU believe is true, is actually false?”

Zong Wuya didn’t stop moving. He continued onward, responding in a calm voice, “Without looking into the matter, the answer will never be revealed. I’m a cultivator, and the purpose of my life is to pursue the true Dao. It doesn’t matter if I fail or succeed. Either way, my heart will be at peace!”

Meng Hao's heart trembled as he watched Zong Wuya pass over the border into the Third Nation. He waved his hand, and the other black-robed men all bowed their heads and followed him back into the Third Nation.

Meng Hao had a strange expression on his face. He sat there quietly for a long time. Zong Wuya's words continued to echo in his mind, and yet, they were incapable of truly affecting his thoughts. In the very beginning, he had been slightly affected, but after that, everything had been an act on his part.

The things Zong Wuya had said seemed like the truth, and virtually any other cultivator who heard them would likely feel as if their entire world had been overturned. But Meng Hao... was the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer!

He was the true successor of Paragon Nine Seals, and also the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

His understanding of the Mountain and Sea Realm actually exceeded Zong Wuya's. The Mountain and Sea Realm was not Paragon Nine Seals' body, but rather, one of his magical treasures. Furthermore, everything that Zong Wuya had described as being an illusion, was in fact real.

Also, when Zong Wuya mentioned butterflies having something to do with the supposed 'real' world, Meng Hao couldn't help but recall the vision he had experienced in which he saw nine butterflies dragging a land mass. 1

"Give up my current fleshly body and go to the supposed real world to get a new one? Gain enlightenment of the true Dao? It sounds really incredible, but... it's completely preposterous!

"It's a pack of lies, just like the lies used to incite the 3,000 Lower Realms into rebellion. That was why they joined forces to topple the Paragon Immortal Realm!

"Perhaps the words they used were even the same... the true Dao....

"Or, perhaps that saying is another one of the traps of the Windswept

Realm to incite one's desires!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

"However, Zong Wuya was being very obvious that he deliberately gave me time to think. It even seemed like he was doing it on purpose.... But why?" When it came to true or false Daos, Meng Hao was by no means at a loss. His Dao heart was steadfast, and any talk about fabricated or true Daos was simply a matter of the perspective of the person speaking.

Such talk was a method of inciting rebellion in the 3,000 Lower Realms of long ago. It was something to confuse and bewilder the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm who came to the Windswept Realm. Perhaps others might believe such talk, but Meng Hao... would not!

The reason he wouldn't believe it was not only because he was the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, or his vision of the nine butterflies dragging a land mass. There was another reason. The supposed true Dao that Zong Wuya spoke of, the true Dao which could dispel fabricated Daos... was completely destroyed by Meng Hao when he was an Allheaven Immortal.

The supposed true Dao could do nothing to shake the Allheaven Immortal Realm; if it were the actual 'true' Dao as Zong Wuya described, then how could that be explained away?

Meng Hao was not confused in the slightest about any of these things. The only thing that confused him was Zong Wuya's attitude.

What he actually felt towards Meng Hao was a complete mystery.

"Now that I think about it, only when the Blood Mastiff flew out from the renegade spirit chamber did the person on the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain that Zong Wuya called Emperor sense that the renegade spirit had been possessed....

"Something is off about that...." He began to pant, and his eyes glittered as he recalled all the details.

"The Emperor on the National Aura Mountain sensed that someone trespassed into that chamber.... That was the first thing Zong Wuya said!" Meng Hao murmured inwardly. Suddenly a tremor ran through him. Then

he thought back to how bursting out of the crater with the mastiff felt like breaking out of some sort of seal.

“Seal... there was a seal in place, and when the mastiff flew out, the seal was broken. That’s when the Emperor on the National Aura Mountain could sense that there was a change to the renegade spirit....

“In other words, the fact that he sensed nothing before then indicates that someone didn’t want him to know!

“And that person, the person who put the seal in place... was Zong Wuya!!” Meng Hao looked toward the Third Nation, panting. All of a sudden, he put all the pieces together.

“He’s helping me!” he thought, shaking inwardly.

“He chased after me, and his cultivation base is clearly far greater than mine. And yet he didn’t attack me, but instead, talked about illusions and the true Dao. Then he even gave me time to think about the matter.

“It would be more accurate to say that he didn’t give me time to think, but rather, that he gave me time to recover from my injuries!

“Besides, his arguments about the fabricated and the true Daos could actually... have been made in a completely different fashion. There was no reason to just blatantly state those things out loud. He could easily have used a more subtle approach. That would have been a much more effective way to sway the listener.

But he didn’t do that. He just said things out plain and simple. Furthermore, he spoke in a way that deliberately revealed the flaws in his argument....”

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He suddenly flew up into the air, following the exact same path Zong Wuya had taken moments ago. He made sure to do things exactly as Zong Wuya had done, both in his flight trajectory and his posture and body movement. He also turned to look back at the Sixth Nation in exactly the same way.

From this vantage point, he could see the central temple area, as well as the Sixth Nation’s army, and the soldier Zong Wuya had looked at. The

soldier wore a thoughtful expression, like that which might appear when contemplating enlightenment.

It was as if this person had heard the words exchanged between Meng Hao and Zong Wuya, and was now contemplating them and, at the same time, coming to a similar conclusion as Meng Hao.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao looked at the soldier, the soldier looked up, and their gazes met.

Meng Hao found himself staring at a pair of beautiful eyes. They seemed to contain heavenly bodies, even a starry sky. Anyone who looked into those eyes would want to be lost in them, and to never return.

When their gazes met, Meng Hao's mind reeled. He quickly blinked his left eye several times in quick succession, utilizing his Celestial Vision technique. He rotated his cultivation base, and his perception of the world changed. The soldier's appearance also changed; an illusion was dispelled, and the soldier suddenly looked like a young woman.

She wore a white robe and had skin like snow. She was spectacularly beautiful, with a sweet, charming smile and stunning features.

A moment later, the image of the woman vanished, to be replaced by that of the soldier. The soldier seemed shocked to have been noticed by Meng Hao. She blinked, thought for a moment, and then began to walk over.

No one noticed her passage, almost as if they couldn't even see her. Not even the other cultivators could detect her. It was as if to Fan Dong'er and the others, this soldier didn't even exist.

"I was just thinking about whether or not I should finally introduce myself, Elder Brother Meng, considering the circumstances....

"But since you sensed me, then I guess it would be appropriate to do it here." As the soldier approached, her appearance changed yet again, turning into the same beautiful young woman he had seen with his Celestial Vision.

She covered her smile with a hand, and looked at him with sparkling

eyes. She seemed completely beyond ordinary, as if she had stepped out from a celestial realm. Her snow-white skin and exquisite features didn't even seem human. A white robe covered a lithe body, a body that could cause any man who saw it to drool with desire. Because of her, all living things in the area seemed to fade and darken.

Meng Hao was dazzled, but he recovered quickly. A moment later, his eyes flashed like lightning as he gave the young woman an icy stare.

"I've been waiting for you for quite some time, Fellow Daoist Xue'er," he said coolly. A flash could be seen as he flew down to the ground and calmly watched her approach.

The mastiff remained behind him. It could also sense the woman's existence, and it stared at her with brutal, icy eyes.

The young woman looked deeply at Meng Hao. In response to him immediately addressing her by name, she simply smiled, seemingly haven taken no offense.

Her seemingly cavalier attitude caused Meng Hao's eyes to widen.

"It seems you've been shadowing me for quite a while," he said coolly.

His previous words had only provoked a slight smile from her, but this statement caused her to stop in her tracks. She looked at Meng Hao with a trace of a lively glint in her eyes, her expression gradually turning serious.

"A mere glance at my reaction led you to such a conclusion?" she said softly. "It seems I've underestimated you, Elder Brother Meng." With that, she clasped hands and bowed.

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1. Meng Hao saw a vision of the butterflies and the land mass in chapter 819. Actually, the original release of the chapter had a slight mistranslation regarding that part, but it's been fixed.

Chapter 1132: Shamed Into Rage!

Meng Hao frowned. For some reason, he instantly disliked this woman Xue'er. She might be beautiful, perhaps more beautiful than any other woman he had ever met. But the feeling he got from her was that she was far too manipulative.

She had obviously used some special technique to secretly shadow him for who knew how long. She might just call it 'observation,' but her methods went far beyond the ordinary definition of the word.

Such methods left Meng Hao feeling coldly derisive. Back when he fought with Dao-Heaven, he could tell how important he thought she was. He had tried to hide it, but Meng Hao easily saw through the facade.

She was the type of woman who, even if you knew wasn't plotting against you, would still make you want to be careful. And once you put your guard up, you wouldn't want to relax. Xu Qing was the exact opposite. When he was with Xu Qing, he felt completely relaxed. She did not plot or scheme, and when she looked at him, all he wanted to do was smile softly back at her.

Although these thoughts ran through his head, they did not change his facial expression.

"I'm from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite," Xue'er said. "Not the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite you'll find in any of the Mountains and Seas. I'm the one and only true successor of the real Immortal Ancient." She smiled at Meng Hao, a radiant smile like a blooming lily, filled with self confidence. It made her and everything around her even more eye-catching.

"Of all the Echelon cultivators I've met," she continued, "the only one that came close to meeting my requirements was Elder Brother Chen from the First Mountain, and he only measured up by half. I was going to select him, but in that very moment, I felt you suddenly appear, Elder Brother Meng.

"And that's why I came looking for you to play a game of Go." She waved

her hand, causing a game board to appear between the two of them.

The black games pieces were sitting on one side of the board, the white pieces on the other.

She didn't say a lot, but Meng Hao could easily detect the profound haughtiness in the words, a haughtiness that was rooted in her bones. She didn't intend for that haughtiness to come across, but it was revealed nonetheless.

"Elder Brother Meng, please, after you," she said softly.

"I don't do Go," Meng Hao responded coolly.

"Elder Brother Meng, please just cooperate. I've come here to bestow you with some good fortune." She looked at him earnestly.

Meng Hao frowned, and then suddenly smiled, although it was a cold smile. His eyes were filled with a profound gleam.

"I don't know what sort of decision it is that you're making, nor do I know why the other Echelon cultivators want to get close to you. But as for me, I'd actually like to ask you a question. What makes you think you can get me to play Go with you? Also, what gives you the confidence to secretly follow me around, then suddenly saunter up and start yakking away? Is it just because you're some sort of successor?" He took a step forward, stamping his foot down, which caused everything to tremble. A wave of powerful pressure surged out toward Xue'er.

"Elder Brother Meng, please, calm yourself down," she said coolly. "Attacking me would be pointless. Furthermore, you're still injured."

Meng Hao's eyes flashed with coldness. "Even if I am still injured, I can still hurt you!"

He took a second step forward. Behind him, the mastiff threw its head back and roared, causing a murderous aura to spring up. The longer it glared at Xue'er, the more intense the murderous air became. Suddenly, it pounced toward her.

In that same moment, Xue'er frowned and waved her jade-like hand.

Immediately, a beam of white light shot out that transformed into a white crane. It let out a melodious cry, along with the fluctuations of an Ancient Realm cultivation base.

“Elder Brother Meng,” she said coolly, “please, just sit down and play this game of Go with me, alright?” In response, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding, and the parrot flew out. As soon as it laid eyes on the white crane, it let out a whoop of excitement and shot toward it.

The white crane stared with wide eyes and moments later, an agonized shriek could be heard. Simultaneously, Meng Hao took a third step, and his energy shot up. He clenched his right hand into a fist and punched.

“Shameless!” Xue’er said, her eyes flashing icily. When she saw the miserable situation the white crane was in, she performed an incantation gesture and then waved a finger toward Meng Hao. However, even as she waved her finger, Meng Hao’s right index finger extended, and he also waved his finger.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed. Xue’er trembled, and her face fell. Meng Hao took a fourth step, a fifth step, and then unleashed a punch.

Rumbling filled the air as Xue’er suddenly dodged backward. As she did, Meng Hao snorted coldly and said, “Get back here!”

His right hand opened from a fist into a palm. He made a snatching motion toward Xue’er, using the Star Plucking Magic to grab her. Xue’er’s face fell as she felt herself being dragged toward Meng Hao. She quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing a snowy tempest to appear around her.

Meng Hao’s expression didn’t change at all as he took his sixth step, then his seventh. His energy surged as a huge foot appeared up in the sky, which then stamped down toward Xue’er.

At the same time, Meng Hao shot like lightning toward her.

Xue’er was panting. She had never imagined that Meng Hao, despite being injured, would still be so strong. At the critical moment, she

extended her right hand, within which appeared a bell. She quickly rang the bell, causing a tinkling sound to float out. A murderous aura exploded up, and behind her, a gigantic, illusory image appeared.

It was an old man, gigantic, ancient, wearing a Daoist robe. He seemed infinitely wise, and was apparently in the middle of delivering a sermon about the Dao. He lifted his right hand into the air and waved a finger toward the incoming foot.

The Seven God Steps' gigantic foot collapsed into pieces. Ashen-faced, Xue'er waved her right hand, causing the illusory figure behind her to wave his finger again, this time toward Meng Hao.

The attack struck through the air toward Meng Hao, who trembled in response. However, the figure of the old man then faded a bit, completely astonishing Xue'er.

Seeing that Meng Hao was continuing to advance menacingly, she gritted her teeth. Suddenly a medicinal pill bottle appeared in her hand.

"Here, take these pills as compensation!" she said, throwing the bottle toward him.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he grabbed the bottle.

"That's an Immortal Pill," she gushed, "concocted, not from medicinal plants, but from the Essence of a great Dao. Consume that pill, and all of your injuries will be healed; you'll completely recover. This is a show of good faith! I'm not your enemy."

"Eee?" he said, looking at the medicinal pill bottle, his eyes glowing with a strange light. He examined it closer for a moment, then opened the top, closed his eyes, and took a whiff. After a long moment, his eyes snapped open.

"A Time Pill!" he murmured.

Xue'er's face was just starting to look calm again when she heard Meng Hao's words, and once again appeared to be astonished.

"I never would have thought that your skill in the Dao of Alchemy had

reached such a high level, Elder Brother Meng. You're the first Echelon cultivator... to ever recognize that pill. You're right, it is indeed a Time Pill. Since you can identify the type of pill it is, then you surely know that such a pill can heal all of your injuries. As you can see, I'm not deceiving you."

"A medicinal pill that adds at least a year of body transformations is indeed something very rare in modern times." Meng Hao put the pill bottle away and ceased any aggressions. Then he called the parrot back, although the parrot didn't seem to be too happy about that. The trembling white crane immediately fled back to Xue'er.

Next, Meng Hao floated over to the Go board, picked up a black game piece, and placed it onto the board.

Xue'er's eyes glittered, and inwardly, she breathed a sigh of relief. This Meng Hao was a handful to deal with, and really pissed her off. However, there was nothing she could do about it. Seeing Meng Hao play a black game piece, caused her to frown slightly. She walked over to the game board, picked up a white game piece, made her move and then waited for Meng Hao to continue.

"I lose," he said, waving his sleeve. Not giving another glance at the game board, he turned and headed toward the mastiff.

"YOU!" she roared, blue veins popping out on her forehead. She had never, ever met anyone like Meng Hao before. "I'll have you know that forfeiting the game is also forfeiting the good fortune I have for you!"

"I'm not interested!" he said coolly, completely ignoring her.

Her frown deepened. Balling her hands into fists, she shouted, "You might not be interested now, but let me tell you, if you win, then you'll get my help! With my help, your path in the Echelon will be much smoother!"

"It was already easy enough even before meeting you," he replied. He slapped his bag of holding to produce the medicinal pill bottle. His eyes glittered for a moment, but he quickly put the pill bottle away. He couldn't quite bring himself to consume the medicinal pill inside before duplicating it.

Unable to hold back from listing all the benefits, Xue'er continued: "You know, other Echelon cultivators all want my help! I'm the successor of Immortal Ancient, and my whole purpose in life is to help the Echelon. If you win, you can even have me as your beloved partner!"

"I'm already married." Meng Hao turned to look thoughtfully in the direction of the Third Nation. He wasn't sure how much time Zong Wuya had bought him, nor how he would resolve the overall situation with the Third Nation.

"I can make you stronger! I can make you the strongest in the Echelon! I can help you accomplish Paragon Sea Dream's plan successfully!" Xue'er stamped her foot angrily. If Meng Hao continued acting like this, it would be impossible to accomplish the tasks laid out by her Master. She was starting to get nervous. She had traveled throughout the Nine Mountains and Seas, and had encountered an entire generation of Echelon cultivators, some of them haughty, some of them gentle, some of the domineering, some of them sinister.

However, regardless of their personalities, she had ways to deal with them. Even the most unwilling would eventually agree to play a game of Go with her. Meng Hao was completely different from everyone else. From what she could sense, the only reason he had agreed to even make one move... was to get the medicinal pill.

"Just what do I have to do to get you to play a game of Go with me?" she said through gritted teeth. "You can't even imagine what kind of help I can give you!"

Meng Hao suddenly turned back to look at her and asked, "Are you the first generation successor of Immortal Ancient?"

Xue'er stared in shock, and said, "No, I'm—"

Before she could finish, Meng Hao interrupted her. "If you're not the first generation successor of Immortal Ancient, then that means there were other successors before you. Throughout the years, there have also been successive generations of Echelon cultivators. Well then, how come none of them ever succeeded in the end? Why hasn't Paragon Sea Dream's

plan been accomplished even after multiple generations?

“Becoming the strongest in the Echelon, and accomplishing Paragon Sea Dream’s plan, are both... Echelon matters! They have nothing to do with Immortal Ancient successors!

“If I wanted to be blunt,” he continued coldly, “I would just say that all the help provided by generations of people like you, ended up being a complete failure!

“You can go help whoever you think needs your help,” he concluded indifferently. “As for me, I don’t need your help.” Meng Hao swished his sleeve. Although he looked very domineering on the outside, inwardly he was feeling a bit depressed. What the hell!? I told her I couldn’t play Go, then she wants to make me play anyway? Hmph!

Meng Hao essentially grew up alone and poor. It was a difficult thing for him to even manage studying, and he had also ended up owing Steward Zhou three pieces of silver. Growing up in such poverty, how could he possibly have ever excelled at things like zither performances, or playing Go? In the end... he really couldn’t play Go. She just hadn’t believed him.

How depressing!

Chapter 1133: What Will You Put Aside?!

Xue'er was on the verge of going crazy. She wasn't sure what she had done to offend Meng Hao. All she had done was secretly follow him for a while, and actually had no ill intentions whatsoever.

Furthermore, she'd even given him an incredible medicinal pill just to get him to play a game of Go with her. Those were the instructions given to her by her Master, to find all the Echelon cultivators of the generation, and find the one she was meant to help.

All of the other Echelon cultivators had been easy to convince; Meng Hao was the only one who wouldn't cooperate.

Seeing him leaving, Xue'er gnashed her teeth.

"I just want to play a game of Go!" she cried. "It doesn't matter who wins or loses, I'll still give you the good fortune, something that can help you escape the black-robed people from the Third Nation!"

"I can help you get out of this dangerous situation!" Xue'er ground her teeth. This was the first time in her dealings with Echelon cultivators where she had started offering them her benefits before she had even made a choice.

Meng Hao stopped and looked back at Xue'er. He had known all along that if Dao-Heaven cared so much about this young woman, there must be something very special about her. Furthermore, he could tell from everything she had just said that she really was very important to the Echelon.

"Your obsession runs too deep," he said coolly, his expression tranquil and impossible to read, even transcendent.

His words caused a tremor to run through Xue'er. Next, he clasped his hands behind his back and began to speak, his tone light. To him, this was like a debate, and going all the way back to his days debating the Dao of alchemy, he had never lost.

"The word obsession is made up of two characters, one relating to

thoughts, the second to actions. If your thoughts are occupied by the game, and your actions pertain only to the game board, then... aren't you merely searching for game pieces, not an Echelon cultivator?

"Playing Go is just a way for you to help make your decision, right? But decisions... can be made in many ways. And you seem to be obsessed with this one method. Instead of saying that you are looking for people to play the game, it would be more accurate to say... that you are stuck within the game itself.

"In the grand scheme of things, the game is insignificant, and yet you have sunk yourself into it as if it were Heaven and Earth. Because you are stuck in the game, your path has become blocked, your Dao limited. The game of Go... is for you, not for me."

Xue'er trembled, and from the expression on her face, it seemed as if she were experiencing enlightenment. After a long moment, she took a deep breath, clasped hands, and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

"This is my fault for being too fixated," she said. "I also understand why you weren't willing to play Go with me, Elder Brother Meng. If you devoted yourself to the game, you would lose yourself in the game board, and fall into that world.

"Therefore, you only played a single piece, then turned and left. It was like leaving behind a single thought in Heaven and Earth, so that the mountains remain pristine and the waters undisturbed. You left behind no ripples or waves, but instead chose to remain on the outside, observing... watching as great changes unfolded...." Eventually her voice trailed off. Finally, she clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao one more time.

"Many thanks, Elder Brother Meng!" Her expression was completely sincere, and in fact, her aura seemed even more extraordinary than before. It was as if she truly had experienced some sort of enlightenment, as if she suddenly understood more about life. Apparently, even her cultivation base experienced advancement.

Meng Hao looked startled, but then quickly recovered his calm demeanor and enigmatic expression. He smiled faintly, and a look of

praise could be seen within his eyes.

He was actually shocked to see the transformation which had just occurred in Xue'er. The only reason he had made his little speech just now was because he couldn't actually play Go. He would never have guessed that his words would actually affect Xue'er in such a way.

"Elder Brother Meng, I already understand that it doesn't matter who wins or loses this game. However, my Master's stipulations are hard to work around. Elder Brother Meng, please do me the favor of making your move." Xue'er's expression was very sincere, and all the haughtiness from earlier had vanished. She now seemed very respectful when she looked at him, as if to her, his words were the Dao.

Meng Hao was grumbling inside, and wasn't sure what to do next. However, his expression of praise deepened. Ideas racing through his head, he looked down at the game board and then smiled slightly.

"Do you really understand?" he asked, his voice suddenly becoming very archaic as he attempted to imitate the way Zong Wuya had spoken and held himself moments ago. "You know, just now, someone asked me what the Dao is.

"My answer was that the Dao relates to the thoughts in your heart. Whatever you focus your thoughts on, that is your Dao. The Dao is shapeless, and cannot be touched; it can only be contemplated, just like life."

Xue'er frowned; this time she didn't quite understand what he meant.

"Life?" she asked.

Meng Hao didn't answer her. Instead, he turned to the mastiff and stroked its fur gently. Its ferocious eyes suddenly turned soft, and it licked him.

At first, Meng Hao had simply been trying to pull a fast one on Xue'er. However, their conversation caused him to think about the cultivator in the Immortal jade mine. Then he thought about the black-robed men in the Third Nation. He thought about many things.

“Look, this is my mastiff, who I raised from a tiny puppy.

“It is not constrained by morals, nor bound by any rules. It only has its primal desires to guide it. The one thing that is not subject to that, is me. I am its family, and it is my family. Besides that, all it has is instinct. Even when it kills, it is not a matter of good or evil.

“The Windswept Realm is similar. Foreign cultivators can become forever lost here, and end up being driven into acting only on instinct.

“That is a sort of primitive freedom and independence, and that is the life that they are living.

“If you defined life as having different Realms, then that would be... the Natural Realm.” All of a sudden, it was as if he broke through to a higher level in his mind. It was as if he had truly reached a level of philosophical enlightenment that caused his eyes to glow with a strange light.

Xue'er stood there thoughtfully.

“Consider them,” he said, gesturing toward the soldiers not too far off in the distance, and the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm. “Now consider yourself.

“You have a special status. You're the successor of Immortal Ancient. You're innately superior, with a unique identity and position, with extraordinary power and authority. What about all those soldiers and other cultivators, though? They also possess such things. The strong have their power, the weak... have their schemes.

“Between humans, the only thing we do is compare ourselves to others, in any and all matters. We compare who has the highest cultivation base, who is richer, who has the better status, who has the higher position, who has the most power, who has the best family background, who is the smartest, or who is the strongest.

“The weak with the weak and the strong with the strong, all people are constantly comparing themselves to each other. Because of these comparisons, people covet what they do not have, and what they do have, they are even more unwilling to lose.

“That is another kind of life, and most importantly, that is the type of life... that most people live. I like to call such life the second Realm, the Pragmatic Realm!

“You are in that Realm, and so am I.” By the time he finished speaking, Meng Hao’s voice was soft. He shook his head and sighed.

Xue’er was trembling, and couldn’t take her eyes off of him. The words he had spoken echoed like claps of thunder in her mind, causing her breathing to become ragged.

She understood that he was speaking from the heart as he mused about things he had seen and done. He had only come up with the idea of the first Realm after seeing cultivators who had become lost in their desires. She had also seen such lost cultivators in her time here in the Windswept Realm.

In her opinion, the concept of his second Realm came because of the struggles of the Echelon, and how the Echelon cultivators were constantly competing amongst each other. It was also in response to her words and strength.

“So... is there a third Realm?” she asked quietly.

“Of course!” Meng Hao looked over at her, his expression ever more archaic and his aura swirling even more mysteriously. His eyes glowed with bright light, like twin lamps on a moonless night.

“The third Realm is ... when you leave something behind,” he said softly.

Xue’er stood there, dumbfounded.

“Are you willing to give that something up?” he asked, shaking his head slowly. “Do you accept letting it go? Are you even able...to leave it behind?”

“The third Realm is the realm of abandonment. After you have something, you abandon it, or perhaps you could say... put it aside!

“Put everything aside, and you have emptiness. At that time, you... can finally explain what the Dao is!” He took a deep breath and looked at Xue’er, who was staring at him blankly. Suddenly, he raised his voice

beratingly. “Don’t you get it?!”

“Consider the game board. What is it? That game board is your world, and in your heart, it is your everything. When all is said and done, it has borders, limitations, creating an intangible perimeter beneath your feet, an area in your heart that you cannot leave!

“If you don’t put it aside, then you will forever remain in the second Realm. For all eternity... you will be unable to explain... the Dao!” His voice seemed to contain a bizarre power that left Xue’er shaking. Her expression was one of struggle, but after a moment, she looked deeply at him, then stretched her hand out and laid it onto the game board. A pop could be heard as the board shattered into pieces.

She closed her eyes, and all of a sudden, she seemed to relax. When she opened her eyes again, she asked, “What is the name of that third Realm?”

His lips moved soundlessly for a moment, and then he calmly said, “I call that Realm... the Dao!”

“The Dao....” After a moment of thought, she stared at Meng Hao closely, as if committing his features to memory. Then she waved her hand, causing a beam of five-colored light to fly out.

Inside of that beam of light was a five-colored crystal that glittered with radiant light. It looked like some sort of incredibly valuable treasure.

As soon as the glittering light appeared, a wind sprang up, and everything began to tremble. The world almost seemed to be unraveling. As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on the glittering light, the Echelon mark in his forehead began to glow.

It wasn’t just him. Dao-Heaven was currently speeding through midair when, all of a sudden, he lurched to a stop. He turned to look back in the direction of the central temple, and after a moment, a look of disbelief and rage covered his face.

“The Echelon Heart. You SLUT!” he roared. “The Echelon Heart should belong to me! Nobody else qualifies to have it!!” He changed directions in a flash, heading toward the central temple area. He knew that the Echelon

Heart would be going to Meng Hao, and although he wasn't completely confident of being able to beat him in a fight, his rage offered him no other option than to go find out.

Lin Cong, Han Qinglei, Yuwen Jian and all of the other Echelon cultivators in the Windswept Realm all realized that the Echelon marks on their foreheads were glowing brightly. They could also sense the call of the Echelon coming from the central temple region.

That call was something like a thirst, felt by all Echelon cultivators. Instantly, their faces fell.

"It's the Echelon Heart!! Could it be that Miss Xue'er finally chose Dao-Heaven?!"

"It must be Dao-Heaven. He's going to get so much more powerful in the Windswept Realm!!"

Everyone was shaken, even Meng Hao. The mark on his forehead glittered brightly, and the five-colored light seemed to be calling out to him. He took a deep breath.

"What is that?" he asked.

"The Echelon Heart. Every generation of the Echelon will have one member who is approved by Immortal Ancient. That person will be bestowed with... the Echelon Heart!"

"Does that mean I've gained approval?" he asked, looking over at her.

"You can't even play Go, and yet you caused me to break my Go board," she replied coolly. "You have won the Echelon Heart. However, you did not win my future assistance. If you ever reach that third Realm of which you spoke, then come find me." With that, she waved her hand, causing the five-colored beam of light to speed toward him. He reached out and caught it, and his mind reeled. In the same moment, his divine sense exploded out to cover the entire area.

"It... belongs to you," she said, giving him another deep look. Then she turned and sped off into the distance.

Chapter 1134: The Echelon Heart!

Xue'er destroyed her game board, bestowed the Echelon Heart, and then vanished over the horizon.

Meng Hao remained behind, panting. Because of the stimulation of the Echelon Heart, his divine sense continued to spread out rapidly in all directions, and his body was trembling violently.

"Echelon Heart..." he thought, his eyes shining brightly. His divine sense had soon filled the central temple region and began to spread out through the Nine Nations.

As it passed the cultivators and soldiers, their faces flickered. When they looked up, they saw roiling clouds rapidly spreading out to cover the sky.

It was as if the Heavens were being obscured, and the lands covered up. The center of it all was Meng Hao. The mortals and the soldiers among them couldn't see it, but the cultivators, especially Fan Dong'er and the others, could see a translucent tempest raging around Meng Hao.

That tempest was the cause of the clouds and the wind that were spreading out in all directions.

Meng Hao frowned. "Don't tell me that this thing's only function is to power up my divine sense and send it out in all directions, is it?"

He had used a bit of trickery to defeat Xue'er and acquire the Echelon Heart. However, he had not won her assistance, and right now, the exact usage of the Echelon Heart was a bit of a mystery to him.

"It can make Echelon cultivators stronger, huh..." His eyes flashed, and without any further hesitation, he closed his right hand tightly around the scintillating Echelon Heart.

He gripped it hard, and his mind began to spin as the Echelon Heart fused into the palm of his hand. As soon as it melted into him, it transformed into five auras that surged through his qi passageways. They spread out separately, filling his entire body. Four of them then disappeared, seemingly concealing themselves inside of him, vanishing

without a trace. Only an orange aura remained. It shot into his mind, and then exploded.

That eruption caused blood to ooze out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. He groaned, and his divine sense suddenly grew to an exaggerated level, roiling out around him. In the blink of an eye, it covered everything in the Nine Nations. Soon, Meng Hao's divine sense had covered all of the mountain ranges and rivers, even the nine National Aura Mountains. In a very short period of time, the entirety of the Windswept Realm was completely covered by his divine sense.

He saw all living things, and all cultivators. He saw Zong Wuya, who had a strange look in his eyes. He was followed by a host of black-robed cultivators.

On the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain, he saw the emperor, whose face was flickering. He also saw Lin Cong, Han Qinglei, and Yuwen Jian, all racing toward him, as well as the enraged Dao-Heaven.

Everything was visible in his divine sense. Then, as he panted, it continued to grow, reaching out... into the void beyond!

Outside in the pitch-black void, he could see the Windswept Realm as a whole, which was currently speeding upwards.

The Windswept Realm was moving, rising upward, heading higher and higher into the void.

Meng Hao's mind spun as he looked off into the distance and saw two balls of light, which repeatedly slammed into each other, as if they were fighting. Within one of those balls of light was the white-robed Paragon Sea Dream. The person she was fighting was a middle-aged man, a man... that looked exactly like the statue he had seen when he had first climbed the National Aura Mountain upon entering the Windswept Realm!

They fought back and forth without speaking, and yet were surrounded by complete destruction.

Meng Hao was panting. He sensed incredible danger, and didn't dare to send his divine sense out any further. He quickly reigned it back into the

lands of the Windswept Realm.

“Just as I suspected,” he thought, his eyes flashing. “Some momentous catastrophe has struck the Windswept Realm....

“I couldn’t get involved even if I wanted to.... For now, it seems the Echelon Heart’s only purpose is to allow me to see more, to allow my divine sense to cover the entire Windswept Realm. And yet, how does that help my cultivation base?” Suddenly, a tremor ran through him. “Oh, what’s that...?”

“Ah, it’s not useless after all!! Covering the entire Windswept Realm with divine sense will allow me to contemplate enlightenment of the natural laws and Essences of this place! I don’t need any World Seal, because I can sense the entire Realm as a whole. Theoretically, I should be able to directly sense the natural laws and Essences!

“Even if I don’t have the required World Seals, I should still be able to do it!

“After all, the World Seals are merely manifestations of the natural laws and Essences of the Windswept Realm!” Panting, his eyes began to shine. He consolidated the power of his divine sense and immediately began to contemplate!

He already had the foundation provided him by the World Seals of the Ninth, Eighth, Seventh, Sixth and Fourth Nations. Therefore, he simply acted according to his plan and used divine sense to begin contemplation.

Rumbling filled his mind as he settled down cross-legged and began to work.

He now had access to far more natural laws and Essences than any individual World Seal would give him. Of the ones he could sense now, around half were the ones that he had already achieved enlightenment regarding from the World Seals in his possession. Now, with the ability to perceive them as a comprehensive whole, enlightenment came to him even faster than it had before.

“There are a total of 3,000 great Daos. 2,700 are located in the various

Nations, with the final 300 being located in the central temple. If I can gain enlightenment of all 3,000 great Daos, then I can fully absorb my second Nirvana Fruit, and become... a true Allheaven Immortal!

“At that time, Dao-Heaven will be no match for me!

“That will also be the moment... when I can truly rise to prominence in the Windswept Realm!”

He saw many natural laws and many essences, and he immediately began to gain enlightenment. A shocking aura appeared on him, spreading out in all directions and growing stronger by the moment. The clouds churned overhead, spreading out to fill the entire Windswept Realm.

Everyone was shocked, and even Dao-Heaven lurched to a stop in midair, face flickering with disbelief. He reached out and grabbed a piece of a nearby cloud, looked at it closely, and then his face darkened.

“This is Meng Hao’s aura!!”

RUMBLE!

1,300 Essences!

Meng Hao’s hair whipped about in the air as he sat there cross-legged, the lands quaking beneath him. This was his good fortune, the greatest good fortune he had acquired so far in the Windswept Realm.

The speed of his enlightenment increased as he spread his divine sense out to contemplate and observe the natural laws and Essences.

He closed his eyes, making it impossible for anyone to see the flicker of augury contained therein. As of now, his injuries weren’t important. His soul spread out along with his divine sense to cover the lands.

1,400 Essences!

1,500 Essences!

He was gaining enlightenment through brute force, violently commandeering good fortune. He was breaking through the limits previously set by the World Seals, walking... a path of enlightenment that

no one had ever walked before.

His aura grew more and more majestic, and his enlightenment was accelerating!

1,600 Essences!

1,700 Essences!

The tempest raged around him, with him at the very center.

The mastiff crouched at his side, its eyes glowing fiercely as it looked about. It would prevent anyone from getting close to Meng Hao, even someone familiar to him.

Its 300-meter frame was like a small mountain, and its eyes were the picture of brutality, seemingly representative of pure slaughter.

It was at this point that the Emperor in the Third Nation suddenly cried out, urgent and furious. When his voice echoed into the ears of Zong Wuya and the others, Zong Wuya sighed lightly. He could delay matters no further. In response to the words of the emperor, the black-robed cultivators' killing intent soared. They had been waiting for this moment for too long. They hadn't dared to say anything about how Zong Wuya had interfered with them earlier, but their hearts had long since filled with discontent.

In accordance with the orders issued, they ignored Zong Wuya and charged forth with blazing killing intent, heading directly toward the central temple region, and Meng Hao.

Zong Wuya went along, but did nothing more than enter the area and watch Meng Hao from afar, his eyes filled with complex emotions and hope.

Everything shook as the black-robed men transformed into streaks of light that shot through the sky, drawing ever-closer to Meng Hao. The mastiff roared and shot to its feet. Its 300-meter frame erupted with energy and brutality, and its eyes were shot with blood as it gazed coldly at the incoming black-robed cultivators.

Meng Hao was its master, its only family. Its purpose in life, its mission, was to protect him. It was willing to sacrifice everything for him.

It had been like that when it was small, and now that it had grown up, it was the same.

“Kill him!” Among the black-robed cultivators, there were three who were faster than the others. They performed incantation gestures, summoning a divine ability that formed a massive handprint which shot toward Meng Hao.

The mastiff threw its head back and let out a deafening roar that echoed out in all directions. It pounced toward the three enemies, and a fiendish wind sprang out. A single swipe of its paw shattered the divine ability, and then it opened its mouth wide, as if to consume the men.

A boom rang out, and the three men fell back, faces flickering with shock. One of them was too slow, and the mastiff gobbled him up. Crunching sounds could be heard, accompanied by a bloodcurdling scream. Then the scream was cut off, and the mastiff swallowed him down.

It stood tall next to Meng Hao, gazing at the black-robed men with ferocious coldness, radiating hostility.

It was at this point that Meng Hao’s mind rumbled again, and his aura surged even more majestically. He had just gained enlightenment of 1,800 Essences!

Chapter 1135: Leave The Rest To Me!

In the moment that Meng Hao gained enlightenment of 1,800 Daos, numerous National Aura Mountains collapsed. By now, the Ninth, Eighth, Seventh, Sixth, Fifth and Fourth Nations were all rubble. Suddenly, six pillars of light shot out of that rubble and up into the air, each one 3,000 meters wide.

The lands of the Windswept Realm were quaking, and the clouds up above churned madly. In the spots where the pillars of light climbed up into the sky, massive vortexes formed.

The six vortexes exuded a power of reversal. Were it possible to view the Windswept Realm from out in the pitch-black void, you would clearly be able to see that, despite having escaped the clutches of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the speed with which it was rising instantly dropped by more than half.

Despite being locked in combat, Paragon Sea Dream and the Windswept Imperial Lord both seemed to be shocked by this.

However, that would only be visible from outside the Windswept Realm itself. Inside the Windswept Realm, the only thing that everyone could sense was that the lands were trembling. Then, the sudden reduction in speed apparently broke something in the lands themselves. All of a sudden, everyone felt as if they were lurching up into the air. With the exception of the remaining National Aura Mountains, all of the other mountains were torn from their bases and flew up.

The same thing happened to the rivers, the cities, and all life forms. Everyone suddenly lurched up into the air.

Everything that was happening caused the people in the Windswept Realm to be filled with shock.

On the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain, the emperor threw his head back and roared.

“NO!!

“Stop him! Dammit! We haven’t reached the appointed place to stop! Don’t let the Echelon cultivators gain enlightenment of the Windswept Dao!” The man’s face was twisted with both ferocity and anxiety. He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing more black-robed figures to appear off to the side. The figures clasped hands and bowed with lowered heads, then vanished, transforming into beams of light that sped toward the central temple region.

That was where Meng Hao hovered in midair, his body emitting rumbling sounds as his energy rose higher and higher. Brilliant light emanated off of him and filled the entire Windswept Realm. As of this moment, he very much resembled the mastiff when it possessed the renegade spirit. Currently, it was as if he... was possessing the Windswept Realm!

Of course, to describe it in such a way is only an illustration, and yet, it wouldn’t be impossible for it to become reality!

RUMBLE!

1,900 Essences!

2,000!

2,100!

Meng Hao’s hair whipped around in the air, and his energy continued to climb. When he gained enlightenment of the 2,100th Essence, the National Aura Mountain in the Third Nation began to collapse. The emperor threw his head back and let out a fierce shriek, and did everything in his power to prevent the collapse, to change what was happening. However, his face quickly fell. He was forced to dodge to the side as a pillar of light rose up from the rubble of the National Aura Mountain.

There were now seven vortexes!

The speed of the Windswept Realm’s rise was once again reduced.

“Meng Hao!” the emperor shrieked. Then he flashed through the air toward the central temple region.

Meng Hao continued to gain enlightenment.

2,200 Essences!

2,300!

The mastiff was at his side, roaring, its body shining with brilliant, blood-colored light. It held nothing back as it defended him against the black-robed attackers. Not a single one of them was able to pass it and get close to Meng Hao.

The mastiff roared, and Meng Hao was shielded by blood-red light.

The black-robed men were going mad, unleashing all sorts of divine abilities and Daoist magics. The violet light of the true Dao descended, smashing into the mastiff and riddling it with wounds. However, it continued to protect the area surrounding Meng Hao. This was the exact way it had protected him back in the Blood Immortal Legacy Tournament. It would defend him until it died.

“Damn this Blood Beast! Kill it!” No matter how the black-robed cultivators attacked, they failed, leaving them utterly flustered. Finally, they attacked the mastiff directly. The mastiff roared and slammed its paw down onto the ground. The lands shook, and blood qi swept about in all directions. One by one, the black-robed attackers were forced to fall back.

However, there were three who managed to break through, and quickly bore down on Meng Hao, eyes bursting with killing intent, performing incantation gestures all the while. However, the mastiff then let out a mighty roar and shot through the air toward them. The swipe of a paw blocked the men, and yet, their deadly combined divine ability ended up slamming into it as a result.

Blood oozed out of the mastiff’s mouth, and its body trembled violently. Then it opened its mouth wide and lunged toward them as if to gobble them up. The three men tried to fall back, but the mastiff’s roar dazed them. Before they could do anything, the mastiff’s jaws closed around them.

“For the true Dao! Detonate!”

“Detonate!”

“Detonate!”

Eyes filled with vicious madness, the three men chose to self-detonate in the same moment that the mastiff bit down onto them. A huge boom echoed out that shook Heaven and Earth. As they exploded, the mastiff let out a plaintive cry. Its body trembled on the verge of explosion before it shrank down from its previous 300-meter size to only 30 meters.

It glared at the black-robed men surrounding it. It didn't fly out in attack, and yet, the blood-colored light emanating out from it grew more intense, transforming into a shield that surrounded itself and Meng Hao. It was like an inverted bowl that rested on top of them, sending blood-colored light high up into the air.

The surrounding black-robed cultivators all attacked in unison, causing huge booms to echo out as the shield distorted.

It was at this point that Meng Hao's energy once again rose as he gained enlightenment of 2,400 Essences!

Next, a 3,000-meter pillar of light rose from the rubble of the Second Nation's National Aura Mountain. Rumbling filled the air, and the clouds seethed as an eighth vortex appeared.

The sky above the Windswept Realm now featured eight prominent vortexes, beyond which was the pitch black of the void.

Apparently, the Windswept Realm's rise into the sky had now been stopped!

At the same time, more black-robed figures sped through the Third Nation, followed by the emperor.

When the Emperor saw Zong Wuya, he glared and said, “Zong Wuya, do you truly dare to hold back from attacking?!”

Zong Wuya stood there silently, opting not to respond.

The Emperor clenched his teeth and said “You—”

“Shut up,” Zong Wuya said coolly. “You, a trifling Spirit Realm cultivator,

dare to raise your voice to me? I only listen to your orders for the sake of the true Dao. I'm not your slave."

The emperor's face flickered, and he stared at Zong Wuya, huffing and puffing. However, he didn't say anything further.

More black-robed men were converging in the area around Meng Hao. They attacked in unison, causing violet lightning to fall. Soon, Meng Hao was surrounded by a sea of lightning, which constantly battered the blood-colored shield.

The shield twisted and distorted, clearly on the verge of collapsing. The mastiff was getting smaller and smaller. It shrank from thirty meters to only about three meters in size. However, it continued to hold on.

Meng Hao's energy rose higher and higher, and the light emanating out of him grew more intense.

2,500 Essences!

2,600!

He was now only 100 Essences away from a total of 2,700. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a voice echoed out like thunder from off in the distance.

"Meng Hao!"

Dao-Heaven appeared in a beam of light that streaked across the sky toward the central temple region. Although a heavy pressure weighed down on him as soon as he entered the central temple region, Dao-Heaven had also received the blessing of the Windswept Realm's qi flow, and as such, he could easily ignore it.

He headed toward Meng Hao with incredible speed, and as he neared, he waved his hand and bellowed, "Screw off!"

Several black-robed men who were in his way exploded into pieces, allowing Dao-Heaven to directly approach the blood-colored shield and wave his finger toward it.

The Heaven-shaking, Earth shattering finger swipe caused the shield to

tremble. It seemed as if it would collapse at any moment; cracking sounds could be heard, and the shield was now covered with fissures.

The mastiff trembled violently, shrinking down again until it was barely over a meter long. Its aura was incredibly weak, but it still continued to defend Meng Hao.

“Give me the Echelon Heart!” Dao-Heaven roared. He waved his right index finger again. When it landed, the shield would definitely collapse, placing not only Meng Hao, but also the mastiff, in critical danger.

In the moment that the shield collapsed, blood sprayed out of the mastiff’s mouth, and it shrank down to the size of a hand. Even as it stood there on shaky legs, Meng Hao’s eyes snapped open.

“Screw off!” he said. Massive rumbling caused everything to shake. A huge windstorm sprang up as his voice echoed out, slamming into Dao-Heaven. Dao-Heaven’s face fell, and he fought back ferociously. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was shoved backward.

The black-robed men were also shocked by this turn of events. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they were shoved away violently. In a mere moment, all the land 3,000 meters around Meng Hao and the mastiff was emptied.

Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet. He was no longer in need of contemplation. He had already gained complete enlightenment of the 2,700 Essences from the areas outside the central temple!

As of this moment, his injuries were completely healed, and he was back at his peak. Completely ignoring Dao-Heaven and the black-robed men, he looked down gently at the mastiff.

Then he squatted down and picked it up in his hand. The mastiff looked like it had when it was young. It squinted up at Meng Hao and then licked his palm.

“You rest for a while,” Meng Hao said. “Leave the rest to me.” He delivered some life force to it, and then put it back into the blood-colored mask in his bag of holding. Then he looked up.

His gaze swept over the nervous black-robed men, who slowly backed up. To them, his gaze was like lightning, and a single look was enough to strike fear into their hearts. The only person staring back hatefully was Dao-Heaven.

“The Echelon Heart belongs to me!” Dao-Heaven cried.

At the same time, Meng Hao lifted up the second Nirvana Fruit and pushed it into his forehead.

With 2,700 Essences, he could not fully absorb the Nirvana Fruit, but he could fuse with it for much, much longer... long enough for a protracted battle!

The moment the Nirvana Fruit fused into him, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared. He did not increase in size like he had before, nor did he require time to complete the process. Azure light flickered, and his energy spiked, like that of a celestial warrior.

Chapter 1136: Meng Hao Busts Out!

Allheaven Immortal!

Surrounded by azure light, Meng Hao's energy surged higher, and he emanated a killing will. He had been continuously held back during his time in the Windswept Realm, but now was the time to rise to prominence.

Everyone who had harmed his mastiff would now die!

He felt no apprehensions; now that he was going to go on the offensive, he would cause a scene that could topple Heaven and crush the Earth. He had been restraining himself for far too long!

“All of you, prepare to DIE!”

He sped through the air with such explosive speed that he left sonic booms behind him. A moment later, he appeared in front of one of the black-robed men, and unleashed a punch.

That punch was not the Life-Extermination Fist, it was simply an ordinary punch backed by his fleshly body power while in the Allheaven Immortal Realm.

Everything shook. This black-robed man was an Ancient Realm expert with eight extinguished Soul Lamps. However, he wasn't qualified to even dodge or block Meng Hao. Before he could even react, the punch landed.

In the blink of an eye, he collapsed, his body shattered, and he was completely dead.

For a single punch to fell an Ancient Realm expert was something that caused all of the other black-robed men to gasp.

However, things weren't over. After delivering the fist strike, Meng Hao flashed through the air to appear in front of another black-robed cultivator, upon whom he unleashed another punch.

The man's face flickered with a ferocious expression, and he immediately spit a flying sword out of his mouth. Meng Hao snorted

coldly and didn't even pause. He followed through with his punch, destroying the flying sword, which shattered into countless pieces. His shocked opponent could only watch as Meng Hao's fist slammed into him.

BOOOOOOOMMMM!

Meng Hao moved like lightning. He teleported seven times in a row, and each time he unleashed one punch. Each punch was followed by miserable shrieks, and the death of a black-robed man. Seven of them exploded into clouds of blood.

This slaughter unfolded in the exact moment in which Meng Hao ascended to the Allheaven Immortal Realm.

The surrounding black-robed men were completely astonished, even disbelieving. Although they had come here to pursue Meng Hao specifically, they didn't actually know very much about him. As of this moment, they were shocked to discover that the person they had been chasing... was actually an indescribably terrifying individual.

Even as the black-robed men's faces fell, one of their number let out an enraged roar. "Attack together!" he cried. "Even if he were stronger than he is now, he couldn't handle all of us at the same time!! Kill him!"

A moment later, the man's head was flying through the air. In the moment before he died, a look of shock could be seen on his face. From behind his headless corpse, out walked Meng Hao, a sword in his hand.

A wooden sword.

"Like I said, all of you are going to die today." His voice was cold, and a murderous aura raged up from his body.

The other black-robed men began to tremble with fear. They might be pursuers of the true Dao, but that didn't mean that they were completely without fear of death. To see Meng Hao in such a powerful state filled their minds with shock, and they began to fall back.

However, it was at this point that the Emperor, who still stood next to Zong Wuya, looked at the men with a red glow flickering in his eyes. He performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and then waved his

finger at them.

Suddenly, similar red glows could be seen in the eyes of the retreating black-robed men.

“For the true Dao!”

“For the true Dao!!”

Howls rose up like those from enraged beasts. The men had expressions of fanaticism and insanity as they all charged toward Meng Hao, violet light swirling up from them. From the look of it, they were actually burning their life forces.

There were a dozen or so who flew through the air in attack, summoning numerous divine abilities. There was a volley of violet lightning, an illusory wild beast, glowing magical treasures, and even a gigantic magical hand.

Rumbling echoed out as over ten different divine abilities and magical items filled the sky and descended toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. He saw the Emperor off in the distance, and snorted coldly. The sword in his hand disappeared, and he took a step forward, turning into a blur that sped through the violet lightning toward the man who unleashed it. He reached out and pushed his finger into the man's forehead, and then, without so much as a backward glance, spun and headed toward the second man. The swish of a sleeve collapsed the man's Divine ability, and then Meng Hao reached out and tapped his forehead.

He moved again, toward the third black-robed man, ignoring his magical item, closing in, and then shoulder-butting him hard in the stomach. Then he spun, lashing out with his right foot, which kicked up a huge wind as it slammed into the heads of three successive black-robed enemies. When he appeared next, he was in front of the seventh black-robed cultivator. He punched out, instantly destroying the wild beast created by the man's Daoist magic.

He passed through the creature, smashing his fist into the seventh

man's chest. Then he jerked to the side, using his back to slam into the eighth black-robed man. At the same time, he extended his left hand, within which appeared the bone-tip spear. He hurled it out, sending it stabbing into the forehead of the ninth black-robed man. Then, rumbling sounds could be heard as he waved his sleeve, sending Divine Flame rolling out to engulf four other enemies.

With his last movement, he appeared above the head of the fourteenth black-robed man, after which he punched down viciously with his right fist.

The air shook, and a shockwave spread out in all directions, slamming into three nearby black-robed cultivators, causing them to tremble violently and let out miserable shrieks.

To describe all of these actions takes some time, but it actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Meng Hao spent no more effort than it would take to turn over his hand, and the nearly twenty surrounding black-robed men were killed in quick succession, completely destroyed. The lingering sounds of the battle continued to echo out over the battlefield.

Then everything went silent.

The remaining black-robed men looked completely shocked. They stared at Meng Hao with disbelief and terror, apparently having awoken from their madness and ardor from moments ago. Now, they edged away from him, trembling.

“W-what cultivation base does he have!?!?”

“How could he be so strong? Is he in the Quasi-Dao Realm?!?!?”

“S-so fast! In a few breaths of time he actually cut down almost twenty of us!!”

Off in the distance, the Emperor's face fell. When he looked at Meng Hao, he was filled with intense terror. As for Zong Wuya, the hope in his eyes deepened, and at the same time, he looked like he wished he could fight.

Dao-Heaven had a very unsightly expression on his face as he sped backward. He simply didn't dare to do anything to provoke the current Meng Hao.

Even as Dao-Heaven retreated, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with coldness. Looking Dao-Heaven's way, he said, "Now that I'm done warming up, it's your turn."

As soon as their gazes met, Dao-Heaven's face fell, and he began to retreat with greater speed. He performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing several illusory beasts to appear that charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao shot through the air like an arrow. He slammed through the beasts without even slowing down; they didn't even leave a scratch on him, and his passage caused them to explode into bits.

"Dammit!" Dao-Heaven continued to back up, waving his right hand and performing an incantation gesture at the same time. The air rippled as a gigantic portal appeared. From within the portal emerged a black-colored fist that struck out toward Meng Hao.

"Break," Meng Hao said, eyes glittering as he unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist. When it slammed into the black-colored fist, Heaven and Earth trembled, and the fist exploded. As for the portal, it instantly began to disintegrate. Meng Hao's fist passed through it and made contact with Dao-Heaven's finger.

A boom could be heard. Blood sprayed out of Dao-Heaven's mouth, and his finger exploded, sending him tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut.

At the same time, the chanting of a curse could be heard from within the portal had just smashed.

"As a Devil Immortal, I call upon the power of my name to curse your blood—"

Meng Hao snorted coldly. Without waiting for the curse to be completed, he loosened his fist, reached into the door, and grabbed hold of what was

inside: a pitch-black, three-horned, humanoid beast.

The beast gaped in shock, then let out a scream of terror and astonishment.

“Y-y-you... you can actually reach through the portal!?!?”

Meng Hao’s hand flexed as Divine Flame appeared. The humanoid beast was engulfed, and let out a bloodcurdling scream. In the blink of an eye, it was burned into nothing but ash.

“Dao-Heaven!” roared Meng Hao as he shot through the air in pursuit, sending a massive shockwave outwards. He was upon Dao-Heaven in an instant and let loose another punch, and in response, Dao-Heaven shouted and unleashed all of the power of his cultivation base. The full power that came from reaching the Ancient Realm nine times was sent against Meng Hao.

A boom could be heard, and Dao-Heaven coughed up a mouthful of blood. Meng Hao continued to advance. One punch. Two punches. Three punches!

Dao-Heaven continuously coughed up mouthfuls of blood. He roared as his cultivation base surged, then bit the tip of his tongue, spitting out some blood which transformed into an entire sea. It didn’t surge toward Meng Hao, but rather, detonated. The massive unleashing of power enabled Dao-Heaven to separate himself from Meng Hao. He sped backward, face pale, coughing up mouthfuls of blood. Then he stretched his right hand up into the air; the sky flashed, and a murderous aura exploded out. Countless tendrils of black fog appeared, which formed into the shape of a scroll painting.

“Meng Hao, I only hit your blood mastiff’s shield two times!” he said through gritted teeth. “It didn’t hurt your dog!! We’re both in the Echelon. It’s the weirdos from the Third Nation who tracked you down and hurt your Blood Mastiff, not me!” He pointed an accusatory finger at the Emperor. He had no choice but to speak up and say these things, but at the same time, he gripped the scroll painting in his other hand. The scroll painting was his trump card, and also a powerful threat. He was now

regretting his earlier impulsiveness, and wished he hadn't come looking to cause trouble for Meng Hao.

It was at this point that, because of Meng Hao gaining enlightenment of the 2,700 Essences, the First Nation's National Aura Mountain crumbled. A pillar of light rose up, the ninth. A ninth vortex also appeared in the air.

The ninth vortex ensured that the lands of the Windswept Realm were now completely stopped in place in the pitch-black void.

Rumbling filled the lands, and the Emperor was panting anxiously.

"Zong Wuya," he said, "you can hold back, but the plan will not fail! You must understand the truth of that." Ignoring Zong Wuya, he extended his right hand, within which appeared an earthenware pot.

The pot was the color of blood, and shockingly, nearly overflowed with boiling blood.

"Countless years of preparation have created hope for the Windswept Realm. It doesn't matter if I'm viewed as a saint or a sinner, I will lead the Windswept Realm to escape from under the 33 Heavens. The 33 Heavens will become the 34 Heavens, and all cultivators of the Windswept Realm will receive the enlightenment of the true Dao!

"Over the countless years, it's impossible to say how many lives have been sacrificed for this cause, for this hope! I will use your blood to help us... activate the Blood World Formation!" Howling, the Emperor viciously smashed the blood pot onto the ground.

Chapter 1137: Drastic Upheavals!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He could sense some sort of indescribably malevolent aura coming from the earthenware pot, as if it contained the willpower of all of the life forms in the Windswept Realm.

A sound like that of infinite screaming rippled out from the blood in all directions, causing the sky to flash, and the nine pillars of light rising up from the Nine Nations to dim slightly. Even the nine vortexes up in the sky seemed to be affected, and looked as though they might stop spinning!

Rumbling could be heard, and the Emperor was laughing maniacally. After having thrown the earthenware pot down, it smashed, sending blood splashing out in all directions. The intangible howling grew more intense, transforming into ripples that spread out everywhere, covering the entire Windswept Realm, twisting it, distorting it.

Meng Hao was panting. Drastic upheavals were rocking the Windswept Realm, and although he had prepared himself mentally, to see these things happening in front of his very eyes was a shocking thing.

The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm all had looks of complete astonishment on their faces.

The earthenware pot smashed, and blood splashed out in all directions. The fierce fighting of the Nine Nations' armies had long since stained the earth red, but as this additional flow of blood spread out without soaking into the ground, and everything it touched became even more deeply crimson.

"Living things, Heaven and Earth, mountains and rivers, wind and clouds... by the power in me, I summon you!" As the emperor's shrill cry echoed out in all directions, the blood from the earthenware pot began to writhe, as if it were alive.

It was as if there was something concealed inside that blood which had now been issued a call. It was like a key that could unlock the door to these blood-colored lands!

The ground in the central temple area was shaking violently. Next, a massive amount of blood began to rise up from in the land, as if it were being called, directed.

A massive rumbling could be heard, as though countless fierce voices were crying out. More blood gushed up out of the lands, transforming everything into a world of blood.

The cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, including Fan Dong'er, were all completely shocked, and had no idea what was happening.

"Windswept blood. Heavenly tears. I call upon you to awaken from your sleep of death!" The Emperor bit the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. His hair was disheveled, and he looked crazed.

Rumbling could be heard as the ground trembled with increased intensity. Meng Hao flashed through the air, giving up on pursuing Dao-Heaven and heading directly toward the Emperor. He had the sudden intense premonition that if things proceeded as they were, a great catastrophe would strike.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao began to charge toward the emperor, Zong Wuya sighed and stepped forward, reaching out with his hand to block the path.

"Meng Hao, you can't stop this from happening. Just watch."

Meng Hao shoved Zong Wuya out of the way, causing a massive wind to kick up. And yet, he was incapable of doing anything to stop the rising blood.

"You intentionally let me live. Why?!" Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing azure light to shine out from him. Instantly, numerous mountains began to descend, the result of the Mountain Consuming Incantation. These were not ordinary mountain ranges, but rather countless azure-colored mountains, Immortal mountains, which smashed down with shocking power.

"I already know what decision you have made," Zong Wuya said softly.

“And you know mine. As for who is wrong and who is right, we’ll just have to see.... Time will answer all questions.” He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and waved his finger. Instantly, his extinguished Soul Lamps expanded and shot up to meet the azure Immortal mountains. A huge boom echoed out, and he fell back a few paces, trembling.

“As for why I let you live... it was because... I hope that if I’m wrong, you can help me accomplish something.” His eyes were once again filled with a look of reminiscence, and complex emotions. He sighed again.

Meng Hao was also forced into retreat by the backlash. He looked up at Zong Wuya, and saw the look in the man’s eyes, whereupon he fell silent.

More and more blood flowed out. In the blink of an eye, everything was covered, making the area a river of blood. Rumbling sounds could be heard, and Meng Hao’s eyes went wide. Off to the side, Dao-Heaven looked astonished, but took advantage of what was happening to retreat.

“Come forth, Windswept blood!” the Emperor cried. His right hand suddenly shot up, and he stabbed his fingers into his own eye. The moment his finger pierced it, the sky filled with crackling lightning.

The blood that covered the lands was boiling, and continued to bubble up from the depths of the earth. The river of blood was now turning into a sea of blood!

In the blink of an eye, all the lands were covered with endless amounts of blood. Even the nine pagodas that represented the Nine Nations were in danger of being covered.

This was the blood spilled by the countless soldiers who had died fighting.

“Windswept spirit, unleash the countless years of rancor, form it into your heroes....” He threw his head back and roared, lifting both hands into the air for a moment before shoving them down violently toward the ground.

The rancor caused the lands to tremble. The sea of blood roared, and

then began to congeal into one figure after another. In the blink of an eye, there were too many to count. After appearing, they let out intense roars, and then stared with blood-red eyes at Meng Hao and Dao-Heaven, as well as all the other shocked cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm.

It was an animosity that had been suppressed for far too many years, a hatred that sank deep into the bones, permeated the blood. It had built up for generation after generation, until it became a storm.

“Activate the Nine Blood Formation!” the emperor roared hoarsely. He lifted his right foot up and then stamped viciously down toward the sea of blood. A boom rang out, and the figures congealing from the blood began to speed toward the nine pagodas, howling all the way.

Everyone watched as the blood-colored figures slammed into the pagodas and then completely vanished, having been absorbed by the pagodas, which then transformed into the color of blood.

The blood that remained on the ground continued to flow into the pagodas, which apparently possessed some shocking gravitational force. It only took a few moments for all the blood to be drained away.

The nine pagodas, having absorbed the sea of blood and the blood figures, were now crimson red and glittering brightly. At this point, nine blood-colored beams of light suddenly shot up from the nine pagodas.

They sped up toward the Heavens, piercing through the clouds to form... nine blood-colored vortexes!

Upon close examination, it was possible to see countless blood-colored figures inside of the vortexes, speeding about as if they were running!

The nine pagodas were not very far away from each other, and thus, neither were the nine pillars of light. Furthermore, the nine vortexes up above were also very close to each other. As they grew, they merged together, forming... one enormous vortex!

The cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm were shocked by all of this. A moment later, the shocking blood-colored vortex filled the sky with rumbling sounds, causing the lands below to quake.

The pillars of light from the Nine Nations had been preventing the Windswept Realm from rising up, but the appearance of the blood-colored vortex instantly shattered the stalemate that they had caused. As it spun, the previously motionless lands trembled, then once again... began to ascend!!

From outside in the void, it would be possible to see the entire Windswept Realm suddenly rising up rapidly through the void.

“Defile the National Aura Mountains!” the emperor howled, stabbing his fingers into his other eye, leaving himself completely blind. The only thing that remained of his eyes were gaping holes flowing with blood. At the same time, ear-splitting laughter rang out.

Simultaneously, the cultivators in all of the sects of the Windswept Realm’s Nine Nations began to tremble, almost as if they were awakening from a dream. Their expressions turned fanatical, and they began to call out with loud voices.

“For freedom!!”

“For freedom!!”

“For freedom!!”

From the First Nation to the Second Nation... in all Nine Nations, in all of the various sects, the same words echoed out to fill the world.

At the same time, the cultivators of the Windswept Realm suddenly smashed their right hands onto the tops of their heads. Echoing like that of thunder could be heard. Blood sprayed out of their mouths, and they swayed unsteadily, faces ashen. There were even some who directly dropped dead.

When the blood sprayed from their mouths like fountains, it flew up into the air and then sped toward the rubble of the nearest... of the National Aura Mountains!

Instantly, the shattered National Aura Mountains were faced with numerous streams of blood, flying toward them at top speed.

The blood was being used to defile the beams of light!

The lands quaked, and the sky turned the color of blood. Dark clouds roiled, and of the beams of light rising up from the Nine Nations, one was instantly snuffed out. Then a second, a third, and a fourth....

In the space of a few breaths, all of the beams of light were extinguished!

When that happened, the vortexes they had created vanished, leaving only one thing remaining in the sky... the lone blood-colored vortex rising from the central temple district!

Rumbling echoed out as the lands of the Windswept Realm picked up speed. From out in the void, it was possible to see the lands rising up rapidly.

Because of the incredible speed, mountains and rivers collapsed, and the land quaked violently. Cities crumbled, and all the cultivators, including Meng Hao and the others from the Mountain and Sea Realm, felt incredible pressure, as if huge hands were pushing down onto them.

Fan Dong'er and the others coughed up mouthfuls of blood, and looks of astonishment could be seen on their faces.

Even Dao-Heaven was shaken inwardly. He fell back a bit, although he didn't flee. He had the feeling that the drastic upheavals facing the Windswept Realm... were reaching a climax.

Chapter 1138: Obvious Bait!

Meng Hao's face flickered, and the sensation of an oncoming catastrophe grew even stronger. His eyes glittered, and he threw his head back and roared. Rumbling sounds echoed out as his body grew rapidly from its normal size to 9 meters tall, 21 meters, 30 meters, 60 meters, 90 meters!

He was now a 90-meter-tall giant, whose body rumbled as he fought back against the invisible pressure weighing down on him. He stamped his foot onto the ground and transformed into a meteor that shot toward the Emperor.

Zong Wuya stepped forward to block his way, causing Meng Hao's eyes to flicker as he unleashed the God-Slaying Fist with his right hand. Instantly, the two of them began to fight.

Booms echoed out, and in a relatively short period of time, the two of them exchanged hundreds of blows. Everything shook violently, and Zong Wuya's eyes filled with a strange light. He was clearly aware that Meng Hao had just reached a level of power that could cause problems for even himself.

"Zong Wuya!" Meng Hao growled. He waved his right hand, unleashing the Essence of Divine Flame. However, Zong Wuya all of a sudden fell back, doing nothing more to interfere with Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stared in shock for a moment. However, he had no desire to fight with Zong Wuya to begin with, plus, the sensation of imminent crisis was growing more intense. He waved his hand, sending Divine Flame out in a huge blast toward the Emperor.

The Emperor laughed loudly, and didn't even deign to look at Meng Hao, simply allowing him to approach without even dodging to the side.

A boom rang out, and Meng Hao's face flickered. His Divine Flame, and his attacking palm, were only about a meter away from the Emperor when suddenly, they slammed into some sort of impassable barrier.

It almost seemed like the will of the Windswept Realm had sprung up around the Emperor, making him... completely invincible!

Not only that, a backlash hit Meng Hao, flinging him backward by about three hundred meters.

“No one can alter the Imperial Lord’s plan. There is no power that can interfere with the hopes of the Windswept Realm. Everything... is for the true Dao. For freedom!” He stood there, eyeless, laughing maniacally as he raised both hands into the air. His cultivation base was clearly not very high, but as of this point, there was an astonishing power of will that had come to converge on him.

“Hear me, Echelon cultivators from the Immortal World: what you want is nothing other than the natural laws and Essences of the Windswept Realm. As the Emperor... I now give them to you!” The Emperor continued to laugh as he waved a finger toward the sky. The Heavens rumbled, and the sky seemed to shatter. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Windswept Realm suddenly seemed to lose its sky altogether.

In its place was a void, within which, if you looked closely, could be seen a blood-colored vortex, rumbling as it spun. It exerted a massive power that relentlessly pulled the entire Windswept Realm higher and higher.

Simultaneously, countless natural laws and Essences that had previously been invisible, were now revealed because of the lack of a sky overhead.

The natural laws were visible as flickering magical symbols that formed a huge net which covered everything. In the locations where the threads that made up the net intersected, colorful motes of light could be seen. Sometimes they were transparent, sometimes they shone brightly. They were... Essences.

Natural laws and great Daos. For the first time ever... they were directly made visible to all onlookers.

All they had to do was send out some divine sense, and they would be able to see the huge net of magical symbols that represented the natural laws. Furthermore, if they touched the colorful motes of light with divines sense, they would be able to detect the presence of Essence.

“Natural laws. Great Daos. There they are, right in front of you!” said the Emperor, laughing. “Echelon cultivators of the Immortal World, you may contemplate them as much as you like. However many you get will depend on your own personal good fortune!” The man’s laughter contained derision, contempt, and most of all, disdain.

Dao-Heaven was about to leave the area, but suddenly, a tremor ran through him, and he looked up at the huge net up above. He saw the colorful lights, and began to pant. Then he sent his divine sense out in all directions and began to contemplate enlightenment.

At the same time, the other Echelon cultivators in the Windswept Realm were completely shaken. When they saw the events transpiring up above, they maintained silence for a moment, but then suddenly began to fly through the air toward the central temple area.

Lin Cong was the first to arrive, whereupon he immediately began to contemplate enlightenment.

Next was Han Qinglei, then Yuwen Jian. Finally, the pudgy Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Nation came, the one who had been seriously injured by Dao-Heaven, and had subsequently fled. He flew through the air toward one particular corner of the central temple area, then, body trembling, began to contemplate.

The Echelon cultivators quickly converged in the central temple area and began to contemplate enlightenment of the Windswept Realm’s natural laws and Essences. Meng Hao was the only one who, despite all of the natural laws and Essences, continued to feel the sense of increasingly intense crisis. He was just about to take another step forward toward the Emperor when suddenly, the eyeless man turned and seemed to look directly at him, despite his lack of eyes. Dark pits of blood stared directly at Meng Hao.

“There’s no need to get anxious, Meng Hao. I might have underestimated you, but that won’t happen again. Actually, I hope that you can get stronger.... In fact, I’ll even help you!” The Emperor lifted his right foot up and stamped it down violently, sending a huge boom echoing out through

the temple region.

The final 300 Essences, which should have remained in the temple, the final prize for the most powerful Echelon cultivator, began to spread out through Heaven and Earth, thanks to the violent stomping of the Emperor's foot.

3,000 natural laws and 3,000 great Daos. That was the complete number, and as for the final number any given cultivator could gain enlightenment of, that would depend on their personal good fortune.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao. It wasn't just the Echelon cultivators who were contemplating enlightenment. Fan Dong'er and the others were also shaken. They immediately sent their divine sense out to contemplate enlightenment of the precious natural laws and Essences.

"You are Echelon cultivators of the Immortal World, and yet, the Immortal World treats you too harshly. Ordinarily, it would be a simple thing to acquire these natural laws and Essences. But instead, they make you fight over them.

"As the Emperor, though, I won't be so harsh. The 3,000 natural laws and 3,000 Essences are now all available for you to immediately contemplate!

"The more the better! For each one you get, your future Dao path will be made that much easier!

"I've also prepared another gift for you. It's... a true and authentic gift that no previous generation of Echelon cultivators ever had a chance to acquire!

"Any world will have 3,000 great Daos. That is a law of life, and of the Heavens. However, it is not an absolute!

"Actually, in any given world, it is also possible... for a 3,001st Essence to appear! That is one additional Essence, the most supreme of Essences, which provides unlimited opportunities. It is the ultimate Essence!

"However, to cause that Essence to appear is very, very difficult. In fact, the only time it can appear is when a world is hovering on the brink of

destruction. Only then will it begin to take shape!

“That is... a Great Dao Essence, one that the Windswept Realm has been forming for countless epochs!

“It is a complete Essence, the soul treasure of the Windswept Realm. In fact, it is... the World Dao!

“Anyone who can acquire the World Dao can acquire that most paramount World Essence. With it, you can own the entire world, or even make your own world!

“Where is it located, you might ask? In the temple itself!” The Emperor laughed and waved his sleeve. Immediately, a supreme aura erupted out from the temple, causing all nearby natural laws and Essences to grow as dim as fireflies under the shining light of the moon.

All of the cultivators instantly sensed the feeling of a supreme Essence, including Meng Hao.

“The Echelon cultivator who gains enlightenment of 3,000 natural laws, of 3,000 Essences, can have a chance to fight for... that final, ultimate World Essence!

“As Emperor, have I not treated you well!? And you know what, not only have I given you Essences to gain enlightenment of, I’ll help you to speed up the process. I won’t even hold back the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!” Strange laughter rang out from the Emperor’s mouth as numerous beams of light flew down from up above onto each of the Echelon cultivators.

After receiving the light of blessing, Dao-Heaven and the others trembled. Even if they wanted to reject it, they couldn’t. The beams of light caused them to feel as if they were fused with the Windswept Realm, giving them a feeling exactly like the one Meng Hao had experienced before.

The only difference was that Meng Hao had received the Echelon Heart, whereas they were receiving the help of the Emperor. Although the result might seem the same, the two processes were completely different.

In such a state, gaining enlightenment was much easier, enabling them to acquire enlightenment of all 3,000 great Daos in a much shorter time.

Each and every one was well aware that this Emperor's words and actions were obviously some sort of trap. He was essentially offering up bait. And yet... they couldn't stop themselves from gobbling that bait right up.

Only Meng Hao rejected the light without even hesitating a moment, causing it to grow dim and have very little influence on him. However, he was still incapable of resisting the temptation of those final 300 Essences that he needed.

He took a deep breath and looked over at the Emperor, his eyes flashing coldly.

"Bait, huh? Fine... I'll bite!" He sent his divine sense out toward the final 300 Essences that he needed, and immediately began to gain enlightenment. Because he already had a Nirvana Fruit inside of him, this process caused it to fuse more fully with him. With each Essence that he gained enlightenment of, the process grew more complete.

In the moment that he had all 3,000 great Daos fused into his heart, his second Nirvana Fruit would be eternally melded into his forehead. For all eternity... he would be, fully and completely, an Allheaven Immortal!

Chapter 1139: Toxic Qi Flow!?

That was the Emperor's gambit!

Although you couldn't say he had honorable intentions or that there were no hidden tricks in his offer, you could at least say that he had revealed his cards and placed the bait right out in the open!

It was as if he were saying, "Here's the bait, are you going to bite?!"

Anyone with a bit of common sense would be able to see that something was going on, something big and dangerous. Most importantly, as these drastic upheavals were striking the Windswept Realm, the Emperor's actions were completely baffling.

However... even though they knew that something was going on, none of the Echelon cultivators could resist such bait. Dao-Heaven couldn't, nor could Meng Hao. Their entire purpose in coming to the Windswept Realm had been to gain enlightenment of natural laws and Essences.

That didn't indicate that they would instantly acquire that Essence after gaining enlightenment of it. However, the Essence would come to exist in their heart, like a flickering flame that, when they returned to the Mountain and Sea Realm, would make their path towards the Dao Realm less confusing, and make the process much smoother.

The ancient proverb says that before painting a piece of bamboo, that bamboo must exist in your heart. It was similar when dealing with Essences, and when the time came to truly acquire their own Essences, they would have a much clearer picture of their road forward.

Most importantly, having that proverbial bamboo in their hearts would even provoke changes in their fundamental nature!

The more enlightenment they gained, the greater the number of flames that were kindled in their hearts. If they could gain enlightenment of 3,000 great Daos, and thus gain 3,000 Dao Flames in their hearts, then, when they finally entered the Dao Realm, they would be able to wield unimaginable power.

Meng Hao's divine sense roiled out as he began to gain enlightenment of the 300 Essences that had been released from the temple.

All of the Echelon cultivators were contemplating enlightenment, as were the other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm. The central temple region was completely devoid of any noise other than the Emperor's wild laughter.

His heart burst with anticipation as he waited for the Echelon cultivators to gain complete enlightenment of the natural laws and Essences.

Zong Wuya stood there silently, a complicated expression on his face as he looked at the Echelon cultivators. Finally let out a light sigh.

"Essences! Natural laws! Great Daos!" Trembling, Dao-Heaven began to laugh as his energy rose, causing a windstorm to spring up around him. Because of the World Seals, he had gained enlightenment of 900 Essences. With the additional help of the Emperor, and the blessing of the Windswept Realm's qi flow, he now had been enlightened regarding 1,500 Essences. Hope was gradually forming within him, and he could virtually see himself stepping onto the path of the Ancient Realm for a tenth time.

"Who cares if it's bait? However much you send my way, I'll take it all!" he cried. Dao-Heaven's eyes shone with a strange light. He might fear Meng Hao, but having become the most powerful in the Echelon indicated that his power and intelligence far exceeded the norm. Were that not the case, he would not have repeatedly avoided the Third Nation the way he had.

Lin Cong was trembling. Like Han Qinglei, he had not acquired any additional World Seals, and was limited to the 300 original Essences from his Nation's National Aura Mountain. He had long since resigned himself to being in a hopeless situation. Now, he trembled as his enlightenment reached 600 Essences and continued to rise.

Bait and plots didn't matter to him. He had no other choice than to do what he was doing. Cultivators lived to become more powerful, and to do so, they had to ignore danger. That was something that all Echelon cultivators were adept at.

Instead of saying that this was Lin Cong's strong point, you could say that it was... a representation of his ambition!

It was the same with Han Qinglei.

Yuwen Jian was panting. He already had 300 more Essences than Han Qinglei and Lin Cong, and had now broken through to over 1,000. It wasn't that he hadn't seen Meng Hao's actions. However, in the current situation, there was nothing more important or enticing than Essences and natural laws.

Then there was the young Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain. He had been maintaining his distance cautiously, but now he looked extremely excited, and instantly sent his divine sense out in all directions.

Everyone was focused on contemplation, both the Echelon cultivators as well as Fan Dong'er and the others.

Meng Hao was also wrapped up in enlightenment. He was in the best position of all of them, and as his divine sense spread out, because of his advantages, experienced an instant breakthrough.

2,800 Essences!

Rumbling could be heard as Meng Hao's energy erupted, forming an invisible tempest that spun around him. He was different from the others in terms of his temperament, and he immediately experienced shocking transformations. It was as if he became more confident. He stood there, seemingly far above everyone else.

The greatest transformation that was occurring was inside of him, with the partially absorbed Nirvana Fruit. After gaining enlightenment of 2,800 Essences, it was becoming almost inseparably close to him.

It was as if Meng Hao's continued enlightenment caused more and more Dao Flames to ignite, allowing him to master the Nirvana Fruit and fuse with it!

By understanding the world around him, he actually didn't even need to take the initiative to fuse with the Nirvana Fruit; it began doing so automatically!

Rumbling sounds could be heard, and his eyes looked like they contained stars, or even the world itself.

Suddenly, the Emperor's voice rang out in a mesmerizing fashion, to be heard by all of the Echelon cultivators.

"Meng Hao has already gained enlightenment of 2,800 Essences. You other Echelon cultivators had better go a bit faster, otherwise... that precious World Essence which has been building up the temple for so many years will all go to him.

"As the Emperor, I can help you, and can even lend you with more qi flow. Just call out to me, and the qi flow will be yours!"

Dao-Heaven trembled, and when he opened his eyes, they were shot with blood. He suddenly slapped the top of his head, causing his entire body to vibrate. Then his Echelon mark appeared on his forehead, and his Paragon magic suddenly appeared, not to attack Meng Hao, but to use as a stimulus for his own power. Regardless of the consequences, he wanted his divine sense to become even stronger.

"Give me that qi flow!" he roared. As his voice echoed out, the Heavens rumbled, and an intense beam of light shot down onto Dao-Heaven. It surrounded him, causing the dust in the area to float up into the air and transform into a tempest. Dao-Heaven trembled violently, but his eyes shone brightly.

Under the pressure, he was able to sense that the speed of his enlightenment had been increased by more than tenfold!

1,600! 1,800! 2,000 Essences!

In the moment that Dao-Heaven reached 2,000 Essences, he began to pant, and a gleam of obsession appeared in his eyes, as if he had suddenly caught sight of his own personal Dao!

That Dao was vague, but because of the help of the 2,000 Essences, it could now be said that he had actually found his own path!

"So that's how it is," Dao-Heaven murmured, trembling, his eyes burning with passion. "I never would have thought.... I need to examine it in more

detail!”

After Dao-Heaven called for the qi flow, Lin Cong and the others gritted their teeth, and then began to follow suit. They unleashed their cultivation bases and went mad with divine sense. Rumbling sounds filled the air as numerous beams of light descended onto them. All of the Echelon cultivators were trembling, expressions vicious as the qi flow power gave indescribable assistance to their enlightenment.

Their speed increased dramatically, especially in Lin Cong’s case. He had nearly gone mad from being defeated by Meng Hao; it was something that his enormous pride just couldn’t accept. Currently, he was roaring, holding nothing back, and was in fact demanding even more qi flow than Dao-Heaven.

He was surrounded by a beam of light 300 meters wide, and his speed of enlightenment was almost unbelievable. In the blink of an eye, he broke past 1,000. After that was 1,200, 1,500, then 1,800. Soon it was 2,000 Essences. He was now in third place among the Echelon, behind only Meng Hao and Dao-Heaven.

“Meng Hao, I won’t be weaker than you!” he roared, face twisted viciously. His entire body was shaking violently, as if his perception of reality was being forcefully stretched and widened. His consciousness grew clearer, and his eyes shone brightly.

“My path was incorrect,” he murmured, “and treading it could never lead to the highest heights. So, that’s what was happening. It turns out Immortality... is like this!” It was unclear exactly what he had seen, but he began to laugh loudly.

Han Qinglei gritted his teeth. Seeing Lin Cong and Dao-Heaven doing what they were doing caused a feeling of competition to rise up sharply within him. He decided to throw caution to the wind, and even though it wasn’t quite appropriate to call for more qi flow from the Emperor, he did it anyway.

Rumbling could be heard as his enlightenment rocketed up. Although it hadn’t reached 2,000 yet, he was able to do exactly what Dao-Heaven and

Lin Cong had done, and see his own path.

Yuwen Jian was still hesitating, unsure of what to do. It was the same with the young Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly trembled. His aura caused colors to flash and a huge wind to kick up. A strange look appeared in his eyes as he gained enlightenment of.... 2,900 Essences!

He was now only 100 away from 3,000 Essences!

His aura was changing, becoming different. It was as if he was casting off all mortality and becoming completely extraordinary!

A more intense aura of Immortality swirled around him, making anyone who looked at him suddenly be filled with the desire to bow in worship!

Even the other members of the Echelon and the other cultivators were all affected. Beneath Meng Hao's feet, green grass and celestial flowers sprouted up, blooming, sending their delicate aroma out in all directions. There were even Blue Lotuses among them, swaying back and forth gently.

"When someone attains the Dao, he paves the way for all others!" Fan Dong'er said breathlessly, feeling shaken as she looked at Meng Hao.

"When someone achieves the Dao, Blue Lotuses sprout and blossom!!"

If there were any Dao Realm experts present to watch, they would be astonished. That was because this was an omen that even few people in the Dao Realm could ever incite!

By this point, the Nirvana Fruit was reaching the final stages of absorption into Meng Hao. It was fusing with him, with his blood, with his soul, as if... it would become an eternal part of him!

As for the visions Dao-Heaven, Lin Cong and Han Qinglei were seeing of their Dao paths, Meng Hao experienced nothing of the kind. That was because he did not call upon any of the Windswept Realm's qi flow from the Emperor. His was a pure enlightenment of the Dao!

Perhaps because of the Echelon Heart within him, his own heart was filling with an increasing sense of deadly crisis regarding the Windswept

Realm.

In fact, even if his enlightenment were going slower, he still wouldn't call upon the qi flow.

The voice of the Emperor echoed out, filled with a bizarre power that entered the hearts of all who heard him. "Meng Hao has already gained enlightenment of the 2,900th Essence. He only has 100 left. The rest of you... had better hurry up, lest you be too late!"

Chapter 1140: Eternal Allheaven Immortal!

Outside of the Mountain and Sea Realm was an endless black void, within which the Windswept Realm was now rising up at an indescribable speed. The void twisted and distorted, sending ripples out in all directions.

Gradually, it was possible to detect that far up above in the void, there was some sort of invisible barrier. Normally, it couldn't be seen, but now that the Windswept Realm was approaching it, ripples began to spread out over the barrier. The barrier looked like a huge net, and currently, a slight depression was visible in it that stretched out in all directions.

The giant net was just faintly visible, and it was covered by a multitude of lightning bolts, dancing back and forth amidst crashing thunder.

On the other side of the huge net were glittering lights, chaos, and apparently, other worlds.

The huge net covered the entire Mountain and Sea Realm, ensuring that it... was clamped down and sealed tightly.

Meanwhile, outside of the Windswept Realm were two globes of splendorous light that were constantly battering back and forth against each other. As they did, the void would shatter, then rapidly reform.

Suddenly, an ancient voice spoke out from one of the globes of light, and it sounded exhausted: "Sea Dream, you still haven't recovered from your injuries. I might not be able to beat you, but I can definitely keep you pinned down for a while. Why are you making things hard for me?"

The exhaustion was not that which came as a result of the rigors of magical battle. Rather, this person had lived for a very, very long time, and his life force was growing dim.

"You are the one making things hard for me, Windswept!" Paragon Sea Dream said, her voice cold.

"I became the Lord of the Windswept Realm first. Only after that did I become one of the Immortal World's Imperial Lords. After all these years, I'm finally leading my world into freedom. Is that so wrong?"

“That’s exactly what the 3,000 rebel Realms said back then!”

Booms echoed out as they continued to fight. Although it only seemed as if the two globes of light were slamming into each other repeatedly, if you looked closely, you would see that every time they connected, it was with power capable of shattering Heaven and Earth. Even the void was damaged. If any Dao Realm experts came too close, they would have been seriously injured by those ripples, or perhaps even killed.

As they fought bitterly, the net up above grew closer and closer to the Windswept Realm. The depression in it also became more obvious. Furthermore, it was just possible to make out the image of various enormous figures waiting behind the huge net.

One figure looked like a giant, with eyes of lightning. Another was some type of beast, with the body of a snake and the head of a dragon, and it exhaled clouds with every breath. One of the figures appeared to be wearing a suit of golden armor, as if it were a celestial warrior. It held a greatsword in one hand as it observed the battle taking place on the other side of the huge net.

There was another figure, barely visible. It was an old man mounted atop a White Ox. He appeared to be sighing.

Further off in the distance was a three-headed six-armed giant, pitch-black in color, with a shocking, murderous aura.

These were all powerful experts from the 33 Heavens, and had come here to observe the approach of the Windswept Realm, as well as the battle between Sea Dream and Windswept.

No one passed through the net to assist. They only watched. It was as if they were trying to decide whether or not the Windswept Imperial Lord, who in the past had unleashed virtually endless destruction upon the 33 Heavens, was actually... turning traitor!!

If he was, then they would allow the Windswept Realm to leave the Mountain and Sea Realm, and become the 34th Heaven!

In addition to observing the battle between the Windswept Imperial

Lord and Paragon Sea Dream, they were watched as the lands of the Windswept Realm approached. As such, they could clearly see everything that was happening there, including the enlightenment regarding natural law and Essences being undertaken by Meng Hao and the others.

One of those enormous figures, the one with three heads and six arms, had an especially cold and murderous look in his eyes, and seemed to be paying especially close attention to... Meng Hao! 1

The Emperor's words were still echoing out through the temple in the Windswept lands. Dao-Heaven and the others experienced enlightenment even more quickly, especially Dao-Heaven. He couldn't bear to be defeated by Meng Hao, and his eyes were bright red. Although he knew he shouldn't dare take too much Windswept qi flow from the Emperor, he gritted his teeth.

"Qi flow!" he yelled. The Emperor laughed and waved his hand. Dao-Heaven began to glow more brightly, as if he had become a source of boundless light. It was even hard to tell the difference between Dao-Heaven himself, and the beam of light around him. The light poured through him, making it seem as if his body itself were made of light.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and Dao-Heaven threw his head back and roared. His divine sense surged out madly, ten times greater than before. In the blink of an eye, he reached 2,000 Essences.

That number increased with incredible speed!

2,400!

2,600!

2,800 Essences!

Dao-Heaven had gone mad. His energy was different than everyone else's, and a powerful tempest surrounded him. His eyes shone with a strange gleam, and he shook violently, as if he had found his own path, his own direction to the Dao.

Simultaneously, Lin Cong threw caution to the wind and called for more qi flow. The Emperor's laughter echoed out as he waved his hand, causing

more light to descend on Lin Cong. Lin Cong was shaking, and blue veins popped out on his forehead. He then unleashed his Paragon magic, and the Heavens trembled. His speed of enlightenment was second only to Dao-Heaven's. He quickly rose from 2,000 Essences all the way to 2,500.

After him was Han Qinglei, who quickly reached 2,000 Essences.

The Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain gritted his teeth and also called for more qi flow. The Emperor's laughter rang out continuously; more light descended, and the young man's enlightenment speed erupted, causing him to quickly break through to 2,000 Essences.

The only one who was still hesitating was... Yuwen Jian. He could see that Meng Hao was not calling upon the qi flow, and was in fact rejecting it with his divine sense. Considering how familiar he was with Meng Hao, he had the feeling that such a decision must have been made for a good reason.

Still feeling conflicted, he gritted his teeth. His eyes then shone with determination as he refused to ask for more qi flow, instead relying only on what he already had to contemplate enlightenment.

More than ten breaths of time passed. Suddenly, Meng Hao trembled, and his eyes filled with an unprecedentedly bright light. He took in a deep breath, and everything trembled. Lightning crashed, as the aura of the entire world seemed to be sucked into him.

Rumbling could be heard as he grew higher. He was now more than 210 meters tall and growing! Incredible energy surged up from him.

3,000 Essences!

As of this moment, Meng Hao had achieved thorough enlightenment of... 3,000 Essences!!

Not one more, not one less!

In that moment, it was as if 3,000 Dao Flames were burning in his heart, lighting his path, filling his heart, blowing away all of his confusion.

His entire body radiated bright, azure light, light which represented the

utmost level of respect. It represented... an Allheaven Immortal!

Massive transformations occurred within him. The second Nirvana Fruit was now completely and thoroughly a part of his bones, his blood, his soul, his everything! It was completely absorbed!

It was no longer a separate thing from him, and would never again emerge from within his forehead. Now, he was eternally an Allheaven Immortal, free from limitations. At any time or place, he could unleash... the full power of a mighty Allheaven Immortal!

Meng Hao threw his head back and roared as his body grew even larger. Soon, he was 300 meters tall, a huge giant. But then, he suddenly began to shrink back down.

Perhaps it was not a shrinking, but a compression!

That compression caused cracking sounds to emanate out from inside of him. Resplendent azure light flickered out, and his energy continued to rise, as did his cultivation base!

His 123 Immortal meridians fused together, forming a single meridian inside of him. At first glance, he looked no different from an ordinary cultivator. He appeared to be just his ordinary self. However, that was actually a sign of a complete transformation!

He looked the same, but fundamentally, he was completely different.

You could even say that, as of this moment, Meng Hao had reached a crucial milestone on his path of Immortality.

Immortal!

Allheaven Immortal!

He let out a long cry that echoed about, causing the whole world to shake. Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu, and the other non-Echelon cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, were all shaking. When they looked at Meng Hao, it was as if they were looking at a holy saint, an Immortal Divinity. It would be impossible for them to look down on him, and they even felt the urge to worship him.

It was hard to say who did it first, but soon everyone, including Fan Dong'er and the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, dropped to their knees and kowtowed.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was surrounded by a pillar of azure light that shot up into the clouds. Despite all of the drastic upheavals, Meng Hao was now the complete center of attention.

Even the Echelon cultivators were affected. A strange light appeared in Zong Wuya's eyes, and he was trembling. The Emperor gasped, and despite the fact that he had no eyes, and should only be able to see darkness, he suddenly caught sight of the azure light, and the figure therein!

Meanwhile, outside of the Windswept Realm, in the area beyond the depression in the huge net, the figures in the chaotic clouds were letting out exclamations of shock.

"That azure light...."

"An Allheaven Immortal!"

"I can't believe there's actually... an Allheaven Immortal in the Mountain and Sea Realm!!"

"This is impossible! The bloodlines of the Allheaven Immortals have long-since been eradicated. How could another one have appeared!?"

"Who is this person...?" Various cries of shock and disbelief could be heard beyond the huge net. All eyes were now focused on Meng Hao standing there in the Windswept Realm.

The pitch-black, three-headed six-armed figure looked on, eyes blazing with flames of hatred.

Even Windswept and Sea Dream couldn't help but look over in the middle of their battling, to gaze upon the azure light shining up through the clouds.

That azure light seemed to be an announcement to everyone that... an Allheaven Immortal had appeared once again in the Mountain and Sea

Realm, in the Immortal World!!

“Not bad,” the Windswept Imperial Lord said thoughtfully, retracting his gaze.

“He’s not just an Allheaven Immortal,” Paragon Sea Dream said coolly. Then she waved her hand, causing a massive wind to spring up as she dove back into battle.

*

1. I’m not going to confirm or deny this connection, but I’m sure this three-headed figure will remind some people of the events in chapter 1023.

Chapter 1141: The Echelon Fights Meng Hao!

Shocking azure light rose up into the sky!

Meng Hao's body rapidly reverted from a height of 300 meters to only 150 meters. However, his cultivation base was rising dramatically.

In the blink of an eye, he then dropped from 150 meters tall to the size of an ordinary person. And yet, his energy seemed to stain the entire sky azure.

"Azure Sky...." Meng Hao murmured. His mind trembled as a new enlightenment suddenly filled his mind. This was a sign that would definitely occur when an Allheaven Immortal appeared.

At the same time, it was an innate divine ability of an Allheaven Immortal!

Azure Sky!

The Azure Sky subdues all willpower!

Even the distant Mountain and Sea Realm was shaken. After all, despite the fact that the Windswept Realm was now high up in the darkness of the void, it was still... in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Since Meng Hao was now an Allheaven Immortal, it affected... the entire Realm.

In the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Nine Seas were roiling and roaring. Countless sea beasts were filled with excitement, with the exception of the sea beasts in the Ninth Sea. Only the Ninth Sea... was trembling in fear, and that trembling was not limited to just the sea beasts in it!

The entire Ninth Sea was suddenly struck with uncontrollable terror.

Gradually, the Ninth Sea began to change color, turning azure. Any sea beast who had shown animosity to Meng Hao in the past suddenly found that they had azure sealing marks shining on their foreheads. The marks flickered several times before vanishing. However, the intense fear of

extermination still floated in their minds.

That was because of the oath that Meng Hao had made. His voice when he uttered that oath seemed to echo eternally within the Ninth Sea. 1

Similarly trembling were all the members of the Demonic Cultivator Horde in the Nine Seas God World. To them, it felt as if a horrific catastrophe was on the way, a massive calamity.

The mountain peaks were also shaking. The Nine Mountains trembled, and all the cultivators in the Mountain and Sea Realm could sense something, although it was hard for them to put their fingers on exactly what. They just had the feeling that somewhere out there, an awe-inspiring figure had just appeared.

The Mountains and Seas were shaken, and rumbling could be heard everywhere. The azure light was especially intense on Planet South Heaven, especially from all of the places there that Meng Hao had visited in the past.

It was the same on Planet East Victory, as well as with Patriarch Reliance, who was now floating around somewhere in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. He trembled as azure light shone up from the State of Zhao on his back.

Even more shocking was the Fourth Mountain, where Xu Qing sat cross legged in meditation. Suddenly, she was surrounded by shocking azure light. The old women standing guard over her were astonished, and even Ksitigarbha, the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea, suddenly opened his eyes.

“Allheaven Immortal....” he murmured.

As the Mountains and Seas rumbled, the sun and the moon suddenly stopped moving, and apparently broke free from their places in the Nine Mountains and Seas, and began to fly in the direction of the Allheaven Immortal aura.

That scene caused widespread shock throughout the Mountain and Sea Realm. Back in the temple of the Windswept Realm, Meng Hao stood

amidst the majestic azure light, and took a deep breath.

“The first two Nirvana Fruits that I absorbed weren’t mine, but rather, the first generation Patriarch’s,” he murmured, eyes glittering brightly. “The next one I absorb will be... my very own Nirvana Fruit!”

He took a step forward, and thunder crashed. Rumbling echoed out in all directions as that single step took him all the way to the temple, where he waved his right hand toward the temple itself and made a snatching motion.

What he wanted was... the supreme Dao which existed in the temple itself.

Rumbling filled the temple. Meng Hao’s hand was filled with Allheaven Immortal power, and yet, it couldn’t shake the temple. All it did was cause fissures to spread out, accompanied by cracking sounds.

Meng Hao frowned in displeasure. In contrast, the emperor’s face fell. He couldn’t see anything in the world except for Meng Hao, surrounded by azure light, and that most holy central temple.

“He... actually caused cracks to appear on the surface of the temple. A cultivation base like that... such battle prowess... he’s basically equivalent to the peak of the Ancient Realm! He’s just half a step away from Quasi-Dao!”

Simultaneously, Dao-Heaven roared anxiously, calling upon even more qi flow to rapidly increase the speed of his enlightenment!

2,900 Essences!

3,000!

After reaching 3,000 Essences, he threw his head back and let loose a long cry. A strange light appeared in his eyes; he had never before been so clear about his future path. His energy continued to rise, and cracking sounds emanated out from his body. His cultivation base suddenly experienced explosive growth, rising higher and higher. In the blink of an eye, it was far beyond its previous level.

By means of divine will, he had found his own path, which would change how he practiced cultivation. From here on out, he would travel the correct path, and would experience incredible cultivation base growth.

His energy soared as he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the temple.

“Meng Hao, that supreme great Dao belongs to me, Dao-Heaven!”

He closed in on Meng Hao with incredible speed, waving his right hand to cause a huge handprint to appear. That handprint seemed large enough to support the Heavens, and it immediately began to slap down toward Meng Hao.

“Screw off!” Meng Hao said coolly. As the hand closed in, azure light burst out. Suddenly, all of the light in the entire world turned azure.

There was a flash, and Dao-Heaven’s eyes went wide with disbelief. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he was flung backward like a kite with its string cut.

“Y-you....” he stammered, astonished. He suddenly realized that Meng Hao was vastly more powerful than he had been before. Even though he himself was also stronger, he simply couldn’t measure up to Meng Hao.

In almost the same moment that Dao-Heaven fell back, Lin Cong threw his head back and roared. A massive tempest sprung up around him as he gained enlightenment of 3,000 great Daos. His eyes shone with a bizarre light, and his energy soared along with his cultivation base. At the same time, he shot toward Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao!” he roared. He waved his right hand, causing numerous screaming ghosts to fly out, covering the sky and emanating an aura of death. They transformed into a gray mist that in turn became a long spear which stabbed toward Meng Hao.

However, in the moment that the long gray spear bore down on him, Meng Hao waved his finger. Thunderous booms rang out, and blinding azure light flashed. The gray spear collapsed into countless fragments, and Lin Cong fell back, blood spraying out of his mouth, his face a mass of

astonishment and disbelief.

Meng Hao didn't even look at Dao-Heaven or Lin Cong. Instead, he lifted his left hand and once again slapped out toward the temple. A huge boom echoed out, and the temple trembled. Cracks appeared everywhere, and it appeared to be just on the verge of collapsing.

He wanted to destroy the temple completely and forcibly take that supreme Dao out!

Dao-Heaven's eyes flickered coldly. "We can't let him get it!" he cried. "We should all have a chance to have it. Lin Cong, let's attack him together!"

As far as he was concerned, now that Meng Hao had the Echelon Heart, if he also got that supreme World Essence Dao, then he would definitely be the most powerful member of the Echelon!

In fact, it could potentially even make him the most powerful Immortal Realm cultivator in all the successive generations of the Echelon!

Dao-Heaven roared, charging forward and waving his hand to summon his Paragon magic. The scroll painting unfurled, and the figure within looked up.

Lin Cong's eyes flickered with killing intent. He had long since come to view the enmity between himself and Meng Hao as irreconcilable. Meng Hao had fractured his Dao heart, and had left behind a seemingly unconquerable shadowy version of himself. If he hadn't been able to acquire enlightenment of 3,000 great Daos... he likely wouldn't even have had the courage to make a move. Gritting his teeth, he roared and unleashed his own Paragon magic.

As the two of them attacked, Han Qinglei threw his head back and let loose a long cry. He was the fourth Echelon cultivator to achieve enlightenment of 3,000 Essences. Energy soaring, cultivation base rising explosively, he looked viciously at Meng Hao and flickered as he charged toward him in attack. As he flew through the air, he waved his hand, causing innumerable bones to appear around him, as well as green lightning.

“Meng Hao, it’s time for us to fight again!”

Three Echelon cultivators were all joining forces to attack Meng Hao at the same time.

Any of these three Echelon cultivators could be considered blazing suns. When they appeared on the scene, all cultivators would tremble at their strength. They had long since surpassed their own Realm. Ancient Realm cultivators, even late Ancient Realm experts, would quiver in fear upon facing them.

However, considering that Meng Hao’s current cultivation base was equivalent to the peak Ancient realm, just half a step from Quasi-Dao, that meant that all he had to do was absorb another Nirvana Fruit, and he would be able to tackle almighty Quasi-Dao experts.

In fact, if he absorbed a fourth Nirvana Fruit, and his cultivation base broke through from the Immortal Realm to the Ancient Realm, then despite being in the Ancient Realm, he would still be able to hold his own against the Dao Realm.

In the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Dao Realm experts were all people on the same level as the Patriarchs of the most powerful sects and clans.

You could say that Meng Hao had already reached a level in which he could cause just about everyone to tremble. He was a terrifying figure that nobody could afford to underestimate.

Meng Hao radiated azure light as he calmly faced the three incoming Echelon cultivators. He seemed threatening without being angry, a true Immortal of Heaven and Earth.

“Before,” he said coolly. “I became a mountain obstructing the paths of the Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Today... I will become a towering peak that stands in the way of all of this generation of Echelon cultivators in the Mountain and Sea Realm!” He shot out in a flash to meet Dao-Heaven and the others. As the four of them closed in on each other, Meng Hao waved his finger toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei screamed, and his Paragon magic collapsed. Blood sprayed

out of his mouth as he tumbled away.

Then Meng Hao struck out toward Lin Cong with his palm. That palm strike caused Heaven and Earth to fade, and became Lin Cong's entire world. His Paragon magic shattered, and he was utterly incapable of defending himself. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he screamed as he spun backward, out of control.

All of these things occurred in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint! Then Meng Hao turned to look at Dao-Heaven, and struck out with his fist.

That fist caused everything to shatter. The statue in Dao-Heaven's painting emanated a murderous aura, but before it could be completely unfurled, Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he looked at Dao-Heaven and softly said, "Withdraw!"

The one to withdraw was not the painting, it was Dao-Heaven!

*

1. The oath made by Meng Hao regarding the Ninth Sea was in chapter 1068.

Chapter 1142: Who Requested My Presence?!

Meng Hao was not so full of himself that he would think that, considering the current level of his cultivation base, he would be able to force this terrifying painting into retreat.

Of all the magical techniques Meng Hao had seen in his entire life, this scroll painting was by far the absolutely most terrifying. That was especially true of the figure inside the painting, who abounded with a murderous aura, almost as if he... were the source of all the murderous auras in Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao wasn't sure how many people would need to be slaughtered, nor how many years it would take, to build up a murderous aura like that. Furthermore, it was merely an image in a painting, not the actual person it depicted. And yet, it seemed as if by simply unleashing that murderous aura, he could annihilate the entire Mountain and Sea Realm with little difficulty.

Perhaps the only type of person who could actually battle the person in this painting... would be an almighty figure like a Paragon.

In other words, the black-robed man in the painting... was also a Paragon!

At least, that was Meng Hao's conclusion. Furthermore, whoever it was that painted this Paragon was obviously a powerful person who wasn't to be trifled with either. That was especially true when Meng Hao remembered how the man inside the painting had murmured something about the Paragon Bridge being incomplete. That caused the hairs on Meng Hao's neck to stand up straight.

From the very first moment he had laid eyes on this painting, Meng Hao had begun to covet it. Unfortunately... it was not some mere magical item. It was the manifestation of Paragon magic. Therefore, even if Meng Hao wanted to steal it, it would be impossible to do so.

The only way it might be possible would be to figure out where Dao-Heaven acquired it, then gain similar enlightenment and somehow make the Paragon magic his own.

Without performing a Soulsearh, though, that would be impossible. Dao-Heaven was the former most powerful Echelon cultivator, and it wouldn't be an easy thing to perform a Soulsearh on him.

Therefore, Meng Hao would have to attempt some other method. As his fist descended, Heaven and Earth rumbled, and an intense power exploded out. It was a power backed by both his fleshly body and his Allheaven Immortal strength. Dao-Heaven's face fell, and he was incapable of doing anything as the power slammed into him. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and he was sent flying backward, completely out of control.

Almost in the same moment that he began to fly backward, Meng Hao extended his index finger, unleashing Demon Sealing Hexing magic toward the Paragon Painting.

The Seventh Hex, Karmic Hexing!

Shockingly, he was using this Hexing magic to look for Karma Threads connected to the scroll painting, in an attempt to discover where it came from.

As his finger descended through the air, rumbling sounds could be heard. The black-robed statue inside the painting suddenly looked up, eyes cold and completely emotionless as he stared dead at Meng Hao.

That look caused Meng Hao's mind to reel and his body to tremble. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and he was forced backward. At the same time, his Karmic Hexing landed on the painting, and immediately, countless Karma Threads appeared.

Strangely, as soon as the Karma Threads appeared, they all turned gray in color. Each and every one of them turned into dust, without a single one being left intact.

"Impossible!" thought Meng Hao, his eyes going wide. What was happening clearly indicated that everyone this so-called Paragon had ever

met, or had ever known... was already dead! Either that, or every person he had ever met or known thought that HE was dead!

Because of that, the Karma Threads were all destroyed!

Furthermore, a person with absolutely all of their Karma Threads destroyed would find it impossible to stay alive. If everyone in the world, and especially everyone who knew that person, believed them to be dead, then it would influence natural laws in such a way... that it would actually kill them.

“How could someone like this even exist? Could it be that this painting depicts a dead person!?!?” Meng Hao’s heart was trembling, and he almost couldn’t accept the situation. His eyes then glowed with determination, and he gritted his teeth. Finally, he bit the tip of his tongue and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Ripples of the League of Demon Sealers instantly erupted out of him.

He was using the power of an Allheaven Immortal to stimulate the drop of Paragon Nine Seals’ blood, the same one he had used to completely absorb his first Nirvana Fruit. By doing so, he could use his Demon Sealer’s aura to connect with Heaven and Earth, to communicate with the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Rumbling could be heard as the distant Mountain and Sea Realm began to shake. The Mountains and Seas trembled, and the sun and the moon began to emit brilliant light. It was almost as if precious treasures existed inside of them that were now forming a resonance with Meng Hao.

The sensation of the legacy of the Demon Sealers fluctuating inside of him caused Meng Hao to tremble. All of his Demon Sealing Hexing magics began to vibrate as he extended his finger toward the black-robed man in the painting.

Demon Sealing, Seventh Hex!

Ignoring the incredible cost he had to pay, he relied on his future status to call upon the assistance of the Mountain and Sea Realm to unleash his most powerful Hexing magic. As soon as it appeared, massive rumbling sounds emanated out from him. His finger descended, and all of a sudden,

Karma Threads once again appeared on the man in the painting.

This time, the Karma Threads were very dim, and instantly collapsed into nothing. It almost seemed the same as what had happened last time, causing Meng Hao's mind to reel. However, in the next moment, his eyes went wide.

What he saw was that the destroyed Karma Threads hadn't dissipated. Instead, they grouped together behind the man. Astonishingly... they formed the outline of a person.

The person flickered a few times, and then stabilized into an image. It was the image of a man, facing in the opposite direction. He had a long head of flowing, white hair.

Furthermore, the man was surrounded by... Karma Threads! These Karma Thread were strange and almost beyond imagination, something Meng Hao couldn't even think of words to describe.

They seemed numerous, almost infinite, to the point where Meng Hao was left in complete astonishment. He had never seen anyone who had shocking Karma Threads like this.

As the Karma Threads spread out, most disappeared out into the void. Only a few spread back down toward the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"Who is this guy?!" thought Meng Hao, panting. It was in this moment that the black-robed man in the painting suddenly shivered. He lifted his head and waved his hand, causing the image of the white-haired man behind him to vanish. The Karma Threads also disappeared.

In fact... the painting itself spontaneously shredded into bits, completely disappearing. However... the black-robed man did not disappear with the scroll painting. Instead, he walked out, muttering.

"I shouldn't be here.... Who is it? Who awakened me? Who... requested me to come from my world to this place!?!?" His voice was filled with a strange and bizarre power, filled with matchless dignity. As it echoed out, the entire Windswept Realm shook. The sky faded, and winds screamed.

Apparently, the previous time he had appeared, he could make the

decision as to whether or not people in the outside world could sense him, and had chosen to remain silent. This time, however, he chose to ask this question, causing his aura to spread out everywhere, to echo even through Karma.

Despite the fact that this was Dao-Heaven's own Paragon magic, he let out a miserable scream. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and he rapidly shot backward, an expression of shock on his face.

Blood spurted out of wounds all over Lin Cong's body, and he let out a miserable shriek as his body withered. Han Qinglei, Yuwen Jian, and even the Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain and all of the other cultivators in the surrounding area were affected similarly.

Meng Hao also coughed up a mouthful of blood, and immediately fell back, a look of astonishment on his face.

It was the same with Zong Wuya, who coughed up a mouthful of blood and looked on with shock.

The eyeless Emperor was now shaking violently. He couldn't see the black-robed man; the only thing he could see was a murderous aura that formed a vortex in the spot where the man was standing. That vortex was filled with innumerable faces and countless lives, all of them screaming, as if they wished to break out from inside.

"Sir... who are you!?!?" the shocked Emperor asked respectfully, not daring to address the man as anything other than 'sir.'

The people in the immediate vicinity weren't the only shocked ones. Near the Ninth Mountain, on one of the four planets, was the Wang Clan. In that moment, the blood of every member of the Wang Clan began to thrum. Their minds spun, and they coughed up mouthfuls of blood. Furthermore, in one of the Wang Clan's restricted areas, in a grove of bamboo, there was a skinny, decrepit old man, sitting there cross-legged, admonishing several Elders who, to him, were members of the Junior generation. Suddenly, that old man began to tremble violently.

"That aura..." He suddenly vanished, reappearing out in the starry sky. Trembling, he looked off in the direction of the Windswept Realm, his

expression one of shock and disbelief. 1

At the same time, not far outside of the Windswept Realm, Paragon Sea Dream's face was extremely calm, and the Windswept Imperial Lord suddenly stopped in place and turned his head. The Windswept Imperial Lord's expression was one of shock, and his heart filled with pounding waves of astonishment.

"Sea Dream, you knew about this, didn't you.... Are you crazy? Why didn't you intervene!?!?" he murmured, ashen-faced. Clearly, he... knew who this black-robed man was!!

"Crazy?" Sea Dream responded coolly, a slight smile on her face. "Perhaps. The only thing left of my home are nine mountains. All the people I was ever close to are buried underneath those mountains, and yet I remain alive....

"I have nothing left to lose. If there's going to be disorder, then... let there be disorder in all worlds, be they the Mountain and Sea Realm or the 33 Heavens, or even the Outside world." Buried within the smile on her face was deep grief, and even madness.

The depression in the huge net above the Windswept Realm only continued to deepen. The figures that waited in the chaos beyond were all staring at the black-robed figure, completely shaken. They appeared to be shocked, flabbergasted. Gasping, they all began to edge backward.

"It's... it's him!!"

"No, it doesn't look like him...."

"Impossible. This is bizarre. What exactly is going on?!?!"

"Report this matter immediately! This is a major development!!!"

Rumbling filled Heaven and Earth, and the Windswept Realm shook violently. The black-robed man closed his eyes and began to make his way off, taking his murderous aura with him. It was as if he were a lonely soul floating off into the distance, with no place to call home. Further and further away.

Dao-Heaven wiped the blood off of his mouth and urgently cried out: “Master!!”

The black-robed man proceeded on, murmuring to himself words that were impossible to hear. He began to vanish into the void.

Dao-Heaven once again tried to unleash his Paragon magic, the result being that his eyes went wide, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. A look of despair appeared in his eyes as he realized that he couldn't use his Paragon magic! Apparently... it had been completely wiped away!

Dao-Heaven spun and glared at Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao!!” he roared. “Give me back my Paragon magic!! Give me back my Master!!” Then he charged in attack.

Meng Hao had never imagined that his Karmic Hexing would cause such a thing to happen. He began to pant as the Black-robed man got further and further away. Heart trembling, he was suddenly able to sense that in his short interaction with the black-robed man, he had apparently created some strange Karmic connection to him.

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1. The old man in the Wang Clan appeared previously in chapters 802 and 964.

Chapter 1143: Echelon Battles!

Meng Hao looked at the black-robed Paragon, and his overwhelming murderous aura that seemed to embody death. The sensation he got was that of an unmatched Paragon, someone with incredible dignity, hidden within which was a trace of blankness. And yet, that strange confusion did nothing to lessen the man's Heaven-shaking energy.

He got further and further away, and eventually stepped out into the void. It was at this point that Dao-Heaven's roar echoed out.

"Meng Hao, give me back my Paragon magic! Give me back my Master!" Face twisted with rage, Dao-Heaven shot toward him, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused black fire to burst out all over his body. It spread out around him, making a black sea of flames, within which numerous enormous creatures appeared, roaring viciously like primordial beasts.

There were a total of eighteen beasts, which joined Dao-Heaven as he closed in. He waved his hand, and the eighteen beasts emitted shocking roars that shook Heaven and Earth so violently that it seemed everything would be ripped apart. They almost looked like they were pouncing out from ancient times to destroy Meng Hao.

At the same time, Lin Cong gritted his teeth and once again told himself that he couldn't afford to be defeated again. Having gained enlightenment of 3,000 Essences, he had no reason whatsoever to be defeated.

He had found his path to power, had found the path which conformed most to his Dao of Immortal cultivation!

"I won't be defeated!!

"Dao of the Yellow Springs; Open Up the Underworld!" he roared, raising both hands into the air and stretching them to either side in a ripping motion. A huge ripping sound could be heard as the air was torn asunder, and a Yellow Springs river shot out, instantly sweeping out across the sky. Within the Yellow Springs were countless vengeful souls that issued bloodcurdling screams.

At the far end of the river was an illusory city, completely sinister in appearance. It seemed to be incredibly ancient, and written above its main gate were three words.

Fengdu Ghost City! 1

The city stood strong and tall, and the Yellow Springs coiled explosively. The Underworld was opened, unleashing massive, boundless pressure, as if all of its power was being unleashed. Lin Cong gripped it like a whip and raised it above his head, causing incredible pressure to bear down on Meng Hao.

Off to the side, Han Qinglei wiped the blood off of his mouth and roared: “Meng Hao, it’s time for you to DIE!!”

Green lightning swirled around him, and his entire person began to transform into what looked like a lightning bolt. His flesh and blood withered until he was nothing more than skin and bones, and then, nothing more than a skeleton.

He sucked all the power of his flesh and blood into his skeleton, and then brandished the green lightning. His energy surged, and the lightning crackled as he lashed it toward Meng Hao. In addition to all of this, vicious poison was added to the attack, which bore down on Meng Hao’s head as if to exterminate his soul!

Three Echelon cultivators joined hands, holding nothing back, unleashing mad power.

Dao-Heaven left himself no room to fall back; he hated Meng Hao down to his bones!!

Lin Cong could not accept another defeat. He wanted to expunge Meng Hao’s shadow from his heart, to use this battle to thoroughly wipe him away.

Han Qinglei’s dignity and honor would not allow him to accept yet another defeat in his current state. He wanted to win, and in the end, to drink Meng Hao’s blood!

Rumbling could be heard as all three cultivators closed in. At the same

time, Meng Hao's eyes flashed with a cold light. He lifted his right foot into the air and took a step outside the temple. The temple itself shook violently, and began to crack apart.

Meng Hao used the power of that step to emerge into the open. He moved so fast that he left behind only afterimages as he blasted forward in the shape of a golden roc.

As the golden roc flew through the air, it flickered with light as it changed colors to azure. It was now an azure roc that suddenly appeared directly in front of Han Qinglei. Meng Hao completely ignored the green lightning as he slashed out viciously with his claws.

A massive boom echoed out as the lightning collapsed. Han Qinglei's eyes went wide as Meng Hao in azure roc-form slashed at his chest with razor-sharp claws.

Han Qinglei let out a roar and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. His body burst into flames, and his cultivation base roared with power. However, at the same time that his energy surged, Meng Hao in roc-form let out a powerful shriek and sent divine sense stabbing into Han Qinglei's head.

Han Qinglei let out a bloodcurdling scream, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. He was just about to fall back in retreat, when Meng Hao once again closed in and slashed at the top of his head with his azure roc claws.

You want to exterminate my soul? How about I exterminate YOURS!

A boom could be heard as Han Qinglei's head exploded. Then, his body trembled violently and followed suit, exploding into bits.

Meng Hao was about to slaughter him yet again when Dao-Heaven's Daoist magic, the eighteen primordial beasts, closed in. Meng Hao was fine with ignoring Han Qinglei, and even Lin Cong. To him, they were almost nothing. But Dao-Heaven, despite not being a full match for Meng Hao, was the most threatening of the three.

With a cold snort, Meng Hao flickered and shot toward Dao-Heaven. Razor-sharp claws raked through the air toward the eighteen primordial

beasts.

A boom echoed out between the two of them, and a shockwave surged out. One attack by Meng Hao destroyed all eighteen beasts. He was like a streak of azure light that smashed them as easily as rotten wood.

Finally, the azure roc flickered, and Meng Hao's human form reappeared, whereupon he extended his right hand and pushed it out toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven roared and waved both arms, causing black flames to surge out, transforming into a huge hand that slapped toward Meng Hao.

From a distance, Meng Hao seemed incredibly tiny compared to that huge black hand. In fact, the two seemed almost impossible to compare. However, as the hand neared him, Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

Demon Sealing, Fifth Hex!

Inside Outside Hex!

Within his extended palm appeared a rift, which, in the blink of an eye, became dozens of meters wide. It almost looked like an eye, which first shrank down, then rapidly expanded.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

As it expanded, the incoming hand of black fire exploded, then the flames recoiled toward Dao-Heaven's direction as if they were being blasted backwards by an indescribably fierce wind.

Dao-Heaven's face fell, and he immediately retreated. In that same moment, Meng Hao suddenly charged forward, waving his left hand to send an azure beam of light to block Han Qinglei's green lightning. Next, he pierced through Lin Cong's Underworld pressure, appearing once again in front of Dao-Heaven, toward whom he slapped his right hand.

Blood sprayed out of Dao-Heaven's mouth as Meng Hao's palm suddenly transformed into a fist, the God-Slaying Fist.

Massive rumbling filled the air, and Dao-Heaven immediately shot backward, his expression fierce, blood spurting out of various wounds. At

this point, Meng Hao's fist transformed into a finger which waved toward Dao-Heaven with deadly intent. Dao-Heaven's eyes began to glow red, and his hand suddenly snaked out and latched onto Meng Hao's arm.

"Heavenly Demon Devouring!" Dao-Heaven roared, eyes shining with madness and killing intent.

At the same time, time seemed to flow in reverse in the spot where Han Qinglei had died moments ago. Blood and flesh rapidly reformed, and Han Qinglei appeared once again, his face pale. As soon as he appeared, he fell back, looking at Meng Hao with both terror, and at the same time, killing intent.

Seeing that Dao-Heaven apparently had Meng Hao pinned down, Han Qinglei gritted his teeth, let out a roar, and charged again.

Lin Cong did the same thing. Both cultivators took advantage of the situation to shoot toward Meng Hao like lightning. The fastest of the two was Han Qinglei, who sped forward like a green lightning bolt!

Lin Cong bit down on the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood, causing his Underworld Realm to suddenly turn blood-red, and crush viciously down toward Meng Hao.

"DIE!"

It was in this exact moment that the cultivator from the Fifth Mountain, the overweight young man, suddenly gained enlightenment of 3,000 Essences.

Rumbling filled the air as he rapidly grew in size. His aura immediately changed, and his energy spiked. His eyes flashed with light as he immediately charged into the fray, joining the other three Echelon cultivators to take on Meng Hao.

Although he had never encountered Meng Hao before, and should actually view Dao-Heaven as an enemy, at the moment... he could tell that the strongest of them all was no longer Dao-Heaven. If they didn't take out Meng Hao right now, then none of them would ever have a chance to acquire that supreme World Essence.

However, just as the Fifth Mountain's Echelon cultivator began to move, Yuwen Jian let out a powerful roar. Face twisted into a vicious smile, he leapt up, reaching out into the air to summon the Ancient Realm treasure, the battle-axe, which he instantly slashed down toward the fat young cultivator.

Rumbling echoed out, and the Fifth Mountain's Echelon cultivator dodged to the side, face flickering.

"Yuwen Jian, what are you doing!?"

"Oh, nothing. You just annoy me!" Yuwen Jian replied with a loud laugh. He hadn't gained enlightenment of 3,000 Essences, and yet had decided to stop contemplation. Without another word, he swept out another time with the axe, and fierce fighting instantly broke out between him and the Fifth Mountain's Echelon cultivator.

Meanwhile, Lin Cong and Han Qinglei were both closing in. Dao-Heaven's right hand was clasped onto Meng Hao's arm, and he was unleashing the Heavenly Demon Devouring. At the same time, Meng Hao stretched out the rest of his fingers to form a palm, which he slapped down onto Dao-Heaven's arm with lightning speed.

Even as Dao-Heaven unleashed the Heavenly Demon Devouring, Meng Hao coldly said, "Blood Demon Grand Magic!"

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Meng Hao's body withered. His life force, his flesh and blood, and everything else was rapidly absorbed by Dao-Heaven. However, when the Blood Demon Grand Magic was unleashed, Dao-Heaven's life force, his soul, his flesh and blood, everything about him was likewise sucked into Meng Hao's palm.

Two very similar Daoist magics were both unleashed at the same time, causing Dao-Heaven's face to flicker. After all the times he had fought back and forth with Meng Hao, this was his first time seeing a Daoist magic from Meng Hao that so closely resembled his Heavenly Demon Devouring.

In fact, Dao-Heaven was shocked to find that his Heavenly Demon Devouring could not quite measure up to Meng Hao's Blood Demon

Grand Magic in terms of its absorption and consumption. His face fell, and he began to howl as his cultivation base rotated in reverse, and explosive power began to build up in his arm.

Being as familiar with the Heavenly Demon Devouring as he was, he was naturally aware of how to counteract magics of this kind. Rumbling sounds began to build up between him and Meng Hao, and he suddenly shoved back. The price to be paid was that his right arm exploded into bits. Dao-Heaven sped backward, face ashen. He suddenly slammed into a random cultivator from the Mountain and Sea Realm, and before the man could react, Dao-Heaven smashed his palm into the man's chest, once again unleashing the Heavenly Demon Devouring. The man screamed as his body withered up. At the same time, Dao-Heaven's right arm rapidly reformed.

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1. Fengdu Ghost City is a famous city in China dedicated to the afterlife.

Chapter 1144: Zong Wuya Makes a Move!

A single Mountain and Sea Realm cultivator turned out to be insufficient to completely restore Dao-Heaven's arm. Without pausing, he appeared in front of another cultivator; this time, his right hand shot out instead of his left, and the mass of mangled flesh and blood that was his right arm stabbed forcefully into the cultivator's chest. A miserable shriek echoed out as the man's body was almost instantly withered up. All of the power of his life force was then absorbed hungrily by Dao-Heaven's right arm.

As that was happening, Meng Hao flashed through the air toward Dao-Heaven, closing in on him rapidly. Dao-Heaven's face twisted with ferocity as he flailed his right arm, sending the shriveled cultivator flying toward Meng Hao.

As for Dao-Heaven, he immediately fell back, this time heading toward Fan Dong'er.

Meng Hao immediately frowned. Regardless of the history between himself and Fan Dong'er, she was from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, just like he was. He extended his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. Rumbling could be heard as he suddenly switched places with her.

Dao-Heaven's face flickered in response, and his right hand rose up. As black flames roared to life, he slapped his bag of holding, causing a black tree branch to appear.

He waved the branch through the black flames, and in response, the branch grew with terrifying speed. In the blink of an eye, it became countless vines that whistled through the air toward Meng Hao.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared in Fan Dong'er's place, he snorted, performed an incantation gesture, and pointed out. Numerous azure-colored mountains suddenly began to descend, crushing down onto Dao-Heaven, causing blood to spurt out of his mouth. He fell back, and Meng Hao followed, making a grasping motion with his hand to summon the bone-tip spear, which he sent stabbing forward.

Booms rang out as the spear pierced through the air, shredding the vines to bits and rapidly appearing in front of Dao-Heaven himself. In this critical moment Dao-Heaven bit the tip of his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood. Astonishingly, that blood first transformed into a sea of blood, then roared and became a Blood Dragon, which opened its mouth wide and lunged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, then waved his finger. A Blood Demon head appeared, which shot toward the Blood Dragon. All the while, Meng Hao's bone-tip spear never stopped moving, continuing on to stab toward Dao-Heaven's chest.

Dao-Heaven let out a ferocious roar and used both hands to strike at the spear. Before the blow even landed, Meng Hao loosened his grip. An afterimage was all he left behind as he suddenly appeared right next to Dao-Heaven. His right hand clenched and then punched out with the God-Slaying Fist.

Dao-Heaven didn't even have time to turn. He tried to dodge to the side, but Meng Hao's eyes flashed with light as his Allheaven Immortal might crushed down.

"Dao-Heaven!" Meng Hao roared, his voice echoing like lightning. Backed by the energy of an Allheaven Immortal, his voice became a massive pressure that smashed into Dao-Heaven. Dao-Heaven's mind instantly began to spin, and his speed was reduced significantly.

By that time, Meng Hao's fist arrived, slamming into Dao-Heaven's side, causing his entire body to tremble on the point of explosion. In the next instant, he extended his index finger and pointed down onto Dao-Heaven's forehead.

A boom rang out as a massive, bloody hole appeared in the middle of Dao-Heaven's head, piercing through from front to back. He shivered, and his eyes went dark. As his corpse began to fall toward the ground, Meng Hao prepared to kill him a second time when, all of a sudden, Dao-Heaven's corpse dissolved itself into a haze of blood that rapidly spread

out in all directions.

It transformed into a single blood-colored magical symbol that began to shine with scintillating red light. The light rapidly transformed into a crimson tempest that shot away with indescribable speed. In the blink of an eye, it was 3,000 meters away, whereupon it reformed into Dao-Heaven, who coughed up a mouthful of blood and stared hatefully at Meng Hao.

Dao-Heaven's heart trembled. He had been defeated in this fight, and had even been forced to waste a life.

Meng Hao stared coldly at Dao-Heaven off in the distance. Declining to give chase, he hovered in midair for a moment before spinning and waving his sleeve as he turned to face Han Qinglei. Han Qinglei immediately stopped in place, and began to tremble and back up. Considering that Meng Hao was staring right at him, he didn't dare to get any closer.

His heart was filled with intense fear. Without Dao-Heaven pinning Meng Hao down, he knew that he was no match whatsoever. Although he knew he had one life left to spare, if he did die, considering Meng Hao's shocking desire to kill, he would likely have little chance to escape with his final life.

In fact, if Dao-Heaven hadn't been there to attack Meng Hao just now, Han Qinglei would already have been killed multiple times. He would be truly dead, with no lives left to save him. Now, he had no other choice than to flee at top speed.

As far as Lin Cong was concerned, his blood-colored Underworld Realm was in the middle of rumbling down toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao snorted coldly, then quickly took seven steps forward. His energy surged, and he waved his finger toward the Underworld Realm.

The Yellow Springs instantly collapsed, and the Fengdu Ghost City was destroyed. The entire magical technique dissipated, and Lin Cong coughed up a mouthful of blood. Body withering rapidly, he fell into retreat.

In the exact moment that he fled, the space he had just occupied

collapsed with a boom. If he hadn't fled when he had, he would have died.

Furthermore... he had already been killed once by Meng Hao in the first battle. Couple that with another life he had wasted on previous occasion, if he died here... then he would be truly dead.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he prepared to give chase.

Off in the distance, the Emperor performed a double-handed incantation gesture and waved a finger toward Lin Cong. Immediately, Windswept Realm qi flow descended, enveloping Lin Cong, upon whose face a look of shock appeared. However, without any hesitation, he accepted the gift, then clenched his jaw and unleashed crackling lightning to block Meng Hao.

Meng Hao eyed the Emperor coldly. He could sense the qi flow bolstering Lin Cong, and as such, decided not to attack him. Instead, he turned and waved his hand toward the temple.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLL....

More cracks spread out across the surface of the temple, and it began to teeter on the verge of collapse. From the look of it, the supreme World Essence hidden inside was now on the verge of breaking out.

At the moment, Lin Cong didn't dare to continue fighting Meng Hao. Han Qinglei had long since lost his nerve. As for Dao-Heaven, he had regained clarity from the state of grief he had experienced after losing his Paragon magic. Now he knew that he... was now no match for Meng Hao.

Unless he had help from some outside force, he would only end up losing a second life.

Outside the central temple, Meng Hao continued to attack, emanating an aura of supreme power.

The temple was on the verge of collapse, as if it might explode at any moment. The Emperor's face flickered; despite having lost both eyes, he was still able to see the current state of the temple.

"We're not in position yet! We still need a bit of time. Zong Wuya, stop

Meng Hao! Buy us one hundred breaths of time, that's all we need!!"

Zong Wuya sighed softly, then suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was outside the temple, very close to Meng Hao. His hand clenched into a fist, and the power of his cultivation base erupted as he unleashed a blow to interfere with Meng Hao.

"Zong Wuya!" said Meng Hao, turning to look at him with a complex expression. He actually had no desire to fight with the man.

"Fight me. There's no avoiding it," Zong Wuya replied coolly. He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and his aura exploded out. Even stronger was the sensation of qi and blood which emanated out from him. Everyone present could feel the power, even Dao-Heaven, whose face fell.

Zong Wuya began to stride forward, right hand unleashing the Life-Extermination Fist, then the Self-Immolation Fist, and then the God-Slaying Fist!

RUUUUMMMMBLE! He only took three steps, but the energy unleashed by the three fist strikes that came with those steps was enough to shock any Echelon cultivator. In fact, from the perspective of Dao-Heaven and the others, Zong Wuya was not a bit weaker than Meng Hao!

"He's at the peak of the Ancient Realm.... A single step and he could step into the Dao!!"

"After stepping into the Dao, success would place him in the Dao Realm. Failure... would make him Quasi-Dao!!"

Everyone was shaken. As for Meng Hao, his expression was a complex one. He suddenly attacked, also unleashing three fist strikes, the exact same ones as Zong Wuya. Life-Extermination! Self-Immolation! God-Slaying!!

Shocking booms echoed out as the two of them fought in the air above the temple.

Moments ago....

“Meng Hao, you asked me before what I would do if the true Dao I believe in is false....” Zong Wuya said. As the first fist strike was exchanged between them, a huge boom rang out, and they both fell back, faces ashen. Without stopping, they attacked again.

“I’m a cultivator, and I seek truth. I seek the Heavens that exists outside of the Heavens, and what I seek is simply an explanation for everything!” Zong Wuya laughed, but Meng Hao remained silent. The second fist strike, Self-Immolation, caused blood to ooze out of their mouths, and rumbling to echo out. Once again, they both fell back, only to charge forward again.

“I am Zong Wuya from the Ninth Mountain and Sea. I did not become lost in the riches, or the power, or any of the other desires of the Windswept Realm. It’s just that... when it came to the true Dao... I couldn’t refuse the chance to know the truth!

“I want to see... what exactly this true Dao is. On this path that I pursue, what I fear is not defeat. What I fear is not getting an answer!” Zong Wuya was laughing as their God-Slaying Fists slammed into each other. Booms filled the air and everything shook violently. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth as he was shoved backward.

Zong Wuya also coughed up blood and was forced back. His laughter grew clearer and brighter, filled with all of his obsession.

“I, Zong Wuya, have lived a quiet and unassuming life. However, the Heavens can bear witness that I have sought after the Dao. To those who search for the Dao, who live in the morning and die in the evening, death means nothing. I shall search for the Dao! 1

“If I am right in the end, then I will have no regrets in this life. If I am wrong, I will equally be without regret. However, there is one thing that I can’t give up on, and I must ask for your assistance to accomplish it.” He laughed loudly, lifting up his right hand and looking piercingly at Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao, since you are my Junior Brother, one who has mastered all three fists just as I have, then I shall now pass on my fourth fist strike to you!

“I am Zong Wuya, and this fourth fist was invented by me. It is my... Fist of Dao Searching!” As Zong Wuya spoke, his aura changed again. The air around him twisted, and he suddenly seemed to grow larger, so big that he could shake Heaven and Earth.

An invisible wind sprang up that swept across everything, causing the whole world to tremble.

Fan Dong'er and the other cultivators from the Ninth Sea were shocked. As soon as they heard Meng Hao say 'Zong Wuya,' and then heard what Zong Wuya said to Meng Hao, they immediately recalled the name they had heard about in the sect.

“That's... the famous and resplendent Elder Brother Zong Wuya!!” Fan Dong'er muttered, staring with wide eyes.

*

1. This passage about living in the morning and dying in the evening comes from actual Daoist philosophy. Similar things were mentioned by Ke Yunhai in chapter 597 and the parrot in chapter 631.

Chapter 1145: When There's Tasty Bait, the Fishes Bite!

As Meng Hao and Zong Wuya fought, the Windswept Realm continued to rise up through the void, getting ever closer to that invisible border.

The depression in the huge net grew more and more obvious; it was as if some huge, invisible hand were pushing hard into the net. In the deepest recesses of the depression, lightning crackled back and forth with increasing intensity.

Further off in the distance, the battle between the Windswept Imperial Lord and Paragon Sea Dream seemed to be heading toward a critical juncture. Sea Dream was a Paragon of past times, and had long ago sustained injuries which still hadn't recovered, but was no pushover when going up against the Windswept Imperial Lord. In fact, the Windswept Imperial Lord's defenses were slowly starting to crumble.

Paragon Sea Dream's attacks caused the void to vibrate, and caused the figures behind the huge net to view the situation soberly.

"1,500,000 meters still left to go...." a voice said, murky and archaic. Currently, the Windswept Realm was moving 30,000 meters in every breath of time. It rumbled up at incredible speed, causing a sea of flames to burst out along its borders.

From a distance, it looked like a shooting star, moving relentlessly up toward the huge net, and the 33 Heavens.

1,200,000 meters!

900,000 meters!

600,000 meters!

Back inside the Windswept Realm, Zong Wuya was racing forward, his right hand filled with the power of the fourth fist strike that he had created. He was like a long streak of light that shot forward directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao had a serious expression on his face. He could sense Zong Wuya's obsession within that fist strike, and could also sense his sentiments about pursuing the Dao.

"Even if their body dies, they must still pursue the true Dao.... for them, it's all in search of the Dao!

"Even if that search lasts only for a fleeting moment, even if those who search for the Dao are born in the morning and die in the evening...." Meng Hao murmured. As he watched Zong Wuya closing in, he realized that this fist... was something that he couldn't fight back against.

It wasn't that his cultivation base was insufficient. Instead, it was a matter of willpower, because what he was up against was not Zong Wuya's cultivation base, but rather... his heart, which was completely focused on searching for the Dao.

If a heart like that could be defeated, then Zong Wuya wouldn't be so obsessed with the true Dao.

Meng Hao sighed softly. After all, he didn't believe in the supposed true Dao of the Outside world. He took a deep breath as the starstone in his left eye melted, covering his body. Instantly, the One Thought Stellar Transformation was unleashed, and Meng Hao transformed into a planet. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he shot toward Zong Wuya.

"That fist contains your will and your thoughts. I can't defeat it, but, I can still fight YOU!" Meng Hao's voice echoed out as he transformed into a planet, and then shot toward Zong Wuya like a meteor.

The two of them flew through the air and collided.

"What does it matter if I die while searching for the Dao!?" Zong Wuya threw his head back and laughed, slamming his fist into planet-form Meng Hao. Everything around them trembled and shook, and a massive wind sprung up that filled the entire Windswept Realm. The sea of flames caused by the friction of the Realm's flight up into the sky grew even more intense, filling the sky, turning the whole Realm into a world of fire.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Meng Hao's starstone began to

crack, and he was pushed backward. Eventually, the planet exploded, and Meng Hao became visible, retreating backward, blood spraying out of his mouth. He looked up at Zong Wuya with a complicated expression on his face.

Zong Wuya stood back in his original position, without having coughed up so much as a drop of blood. However, his right hand suddenly transformed into ash and then... vanished. And yet, he didn't seem to mind. He looked up at the flames filling the sky, and the gleam of obsession could be seen in his eyes, as well as hope.

The Windswept Realm was now getting even closer to the huge net. It was now only 300,000 meters away!!

270,000 meters!

210,000 meters!

150,000 meters!

90,000 meters!

The lands of the Windswept Realm were beginning to crack and shatter; rivers dried up, and the sky was a mass of burning flames. Just beyond the flames, Meng Hao could make out that huge net off in the void, beyond which was the murkiness, and the shocking figures that waited there.

Apparently... there was no way to prevent the Windswept Realm from leaving!

30,000 meters!

In the blink of an eye, the Windswept Realm was closer than 30,000 meters. However, it was at this point that the entire Realm suddenly jerked to a halt, as if it had just run into some invisible barrier. A boom rattled out, and the lands seemed to be on the verge of complete collapse. Meng Hao and the others couldn't prevent themselves from coughing up mouthfuls of blood.

At that distance of 30,000 meters from the net, the Windswept Realm was suddenly stopped, and seemed incapable of making it through the

final stretch!

It was at this point that the Emperor's voice rang out with anticipation and fanaticism.

"Living beings of the Windswept Realm, over countless years, you have lamented, hated, and struggled. Helpless, you have spilled your own blood and delivered forth your souls.

"Now, I call on you to return. Souls of the Windswept Realm, use my blood as the path, enter my orifices and become my spirit! COME!" His voice seemed to contain some sort of bizarre power that, as he spoke, caused blackened blood to ooze out of his eyes and ears. He began to shake violently as massive amounts of blood oozed out of all the pores in his body.

His Imperial robes quickly became robes of blood!

Even as the blood soaked him, the earth shook, the sky cracked, and the mountains shook. The dried up rivers quivered, and even the wind and flames trembled.

The entire Realm suddenly began to sway as numerous souls floated up. They bored out of the mountains, the rivers, the sky, and the flames. They came from all parts of the Windswept Realm, souls boring out of every location.

There were too many to count, and they converged from all locations, flying together into that single blood-colored vortex!

They seemed endless, infinite, and each one fairly burst with obsession, fervor, and anticipation. They poured into the vortex, which began to spin, erupting with endless soul power that then powered the vortex!

The vortex spun rapidly. Since the Windswept Realm itself couldn't push itself that last 30,000 meters, then ... the souls of the life forms which had died there throughout the countless years would pay the price to make it happen.

They would make up for that little bit of lacking power!

Meng Hao was inwardly shaken as he saw the congregated souls form into a tempest. The vortex spun rapidly, causing the Windswept Realm to tremble, and then begin to push through the final 30,000 meters.

24,000 meters. 15,000 meters! 9,000 meters!!

“33 Heavens!” cried the deaf and blind Emperor. His divine sense had long since wasted to nothing. He was like a candle on the verge of flickering out. By this point, it didn’t matter if the Windswept Realm succeeded or failed, he would die!

Of course, he didn’t care about that. As he said, he didn’t care if people called him a sinner or a saint. His actions were not for the Imperial Lord, but rather... for the Windswept Realm as a whole!

“I convinced the Imperial Lord to make a move, and you people still don’t trust me!?!?”

“Well it doesn’t matter whether you believe me or not. I will offer up the Windswept Realm’s only World Essence. I beg of you, please... open the door!!” The Emperor was trembling as he raised both hands into the air. A boom could be heard as his arms exploded, sending blood spraying out in all directions. At the same time, the already cracked and ruined temple suddenly exploded into bits!

It was as if a cage had been opened, allowing that imprisoned supreme World Essence to suddenly explode out. It was a beam of light that looked very similar to the Windswept qi flow, except more radiant, filled with a bright will.

The light shot up into the sky, leaving the Windswept Realm, spanning the 9,000-meter distance and slamming into the huge net.

In that instant, the net trembled, and suddenly shone with brilliant, resplendent light. Countless lightning bolts danced, and massive roaring sounds echoed out. Massive pressure built up over the entire net, which blocked the invading World Essence from entering.

The Emperor threw his head back and laugh maniacally, whereupon his legs exploded into bits.

“Echelon cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm, you have benefited from the qi flow and Essences of the Windswept Realm, which I bestowed upon you. Now... it is time for you to pay back what you owe!” Even as the Emperor’s sinister and bizarre words rang out, his chest exploded, and a crystal ball flew out!

As soon as the crystal ball appeared, the three souls inside burst out. One of them was the 10th Echelon cultivator, Hai Dongqing. The other was boyish Hong Bin. The third was someone who Dao-Heaven instantly recognized; it was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain, the one he had killed!

Three Echelon cultivators, whose souls everyone had presumed to be dead. All of a sudden, however, their souls appeared here!

Meng Hao was shocked, and Dao-Heaven could barely believe his eyes. As for Yuwen Jian, when he saw Hong Bin’s soul, his eyes instantly became shot with blood.

However, before anyone could take any action, ten beams of light suddenly shot out from the glowing pillar that was the World Essence!

Those ten beams of light resembled chains, and they shot forth with incredible speed and power. In fact, there was nothing anyone could do to block them as three of the chains instantly latched onto Hong Bin and the other two souls.

They immediately began to tremble and let out miserable shrieks. Flickering light emanated out from them as their Daos, their life forces, everything about them, were shackled tight and began to be absorbed.

Meng Hao and the others were shocked. In the blink of an eye, the rest of the chains flew down toward the other Echelon cultivators. Lin Cong and Han Qinglei were incapable of even dodging, and were instantly bound up. Yuwen Jian and the young Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain were similarly caught. Dao-Heaven roared and tried to start fighting, but was incapable of doing anything other than being tied up.

Even Meng Hao was caught, despite doing his best to evade.

Rumbling filled the air as all of the Echelon cultivators who had taken the bait laid out by the Emperor were instantly shackled. Then, the World Essence began to suck away at them to bolster the shining light!

Screams that didn't even sound like they came from human mouths instantly filled the air. These were Echelon cultivators, but they couldn't even control their voices; they were no longer Chosen, they were now... power sources to strengthen the World Essence!

The Emperor's scheme had finally come to fruition. After all... when there's tasty bait, the fishes bite!!

Chapter 1146: What Makes You Think I'll Give Them To You!?

The supreme World Essence was a pillar of light that shot up from the rubble of the central temple to slam into the huge net up above, causing increasingly intense ripples to spread out.

Of the ten chains spreading out from the pillar of light, nine had completely bound the Echelon cultivators inside of them, who let out bloodcurdling screams. The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm looked on with expressions of shock. Massive waves of astonishment surged through their hearts, and they scarcely dared to believe their eyes.

These were Echelon cultivators, blazing suns of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Any one of them occupied a position far above Chosen, and you could even say that they were Lords of their generation. Eventually, they would grow into the future leaders of the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

They were so powerful that they could fight with cultivators of the Senior generation. Even the weakest of their number could look down arrogantly at all Heaven and Earth, and that wasn't even to mention the stunning forerunners like Meng Hao and Dao-Heaven.

But now... they were chained up, even Dao-Heaven, who trembled and screamed. He had no desire to cry out, and yet couldn't stop himself. He had gained enlightenment of 3,000 great Daos, and now he was experiencing something that felt like Soulsearching. A massive suction force was being exerted on his mind, absorbing him through the chain to feed the World Essence's pillar of light.

However, there were a total of ten chains stretching out from the pillar of light, which meant that there was still one final chain which hadn't latched onto anything, as if it couldn't find its target.

The Emperor was laughing maniacally; his legs had exploded, and he had already lost his arm. Blood flowed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and

mouth. However, it was at this point that, all of a sudden, an intense light suddenly began to shine out from his forehead: the glow of an Echelon mark!

In the moment that the Echelon mark appeared, the final chain sped through the air like a snake to wrap around him.

Unexpectedly, he was the final person to be absorbed!

His face twisted as incredible pain surged through his body. However, he didn't scream; instead, he just continued to laugh uproariously, laughter filled with obsession and madness. All the surrounding onlookers were completely shocked.

Only Zong Wuya seemed unmoved, and stood there silent and taciturn. He looked up into the void, at the huge net that seemed to be on the verge of being pierced through by the World Essence light.

By this point, the lands of the Windswept Realm were only 3,000 meters away from the net!!

Rumbling filled the void as the figures behind the huge net looked on with glittering eyes. Even at this point, they still weren't ready to make any rash decisions. They continued to watch the fierce battle taking place between Paragon Sea Dream and the Windswept Imperial Lord. No matter how they analyzed it, it truly appeared as if neither party was holding back. Paragon Sea Dream was clearly weak, and still had not recovered from her old injuries. Despite that... the watching figures still hadn't emerged from behind the net to attack.

Caution. That was what these rebels from the 33 Heavens had come to view as the driving principle they would stick to after having sacrificed countless amounts of shed blood to gain their freedom!

The figures behind the huge net looked on as the Windswept Realm's World Essence light continued to absorb power from the ten Echelon cultivators, which included the Emperor. As a result, the pillar of light began to glow with even more scintillating brightness. At the same time, a huge black hole began to form within the giant net!

That black hole was like a vortex that spun endlessly and crackled with numerous bolts of lightning. Rumbling sounds filled the air as a teleportation portal formed!

Dao-Heaven was shaking, his screams growing more intense. It was the same with everyone else, including the souls of Hai Dongqing, Hong Bin, and the other Echelon cultivator. Those three should have died already, but the Emperor had used the power of the Windswept Realm to somehow capture and collect their souls.

A boom could be heard as Hai Dongqing was the first to give out. His soul exploded into bits of ash, all of which were sucked up into the chain, which then retracted back inside the pillar of light. The light grew even more intense, and the rumbling black hole in the giant net grew larger.

The next to go was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain. After that was Hong Bin. Both souls exploded and faded away, after which the chains that had bound them retracted into the pillar of light. As more time went by, the other Echelon cultivators were gradually losing their ability to endure.

Blood oozed out of Dao-Heaven's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Lin Cong and Han Qinglei were incredibly withered, as was Yuwen Jian. The worst off was the young Echelon cultivator from the Fifth Mountain. His previously pudgy frame was now little more than a sack of bones. He was trembling violently, and his eyes were blank, as if his soul had already been sucked away.

A moment later, a boom could be heard as he exploded. There was no bloody mist that could be re-formed. He was completely dead, his life gone and sucked away by the chain.

With the death of each Echelon cultivator, the Daos of the Windswept Realm which they had acquired were absorbed by the pillar of light. When none of those 3,000 great Daos were left, then the result would be what happened starting with Hai Dongqing: complete and utter death!

Meng Hao had a vicious expression on his face. The power of the chain was not as terrifying to him as it was to the others. In fact, he was the one

exception among the Echelon cultivators, the only one who wasn't screaming!

And yet, his Essences and life force were still being absorbed!

2,999 Essences!

2,998 Essences!

2,997 Essences!

The chain sucked away his understanding of the 3,000 great Daos, but it wasn't an easy task. It could only suck away one Dao at a time, the reason being... that everyone else had gotten their Daos with the help of the Emperor's Windswept Realm qi flow. However, his came with the help of the Echelon Heart. Because of the Echelon Heart, it was as if he himself was the qi flow, and had taken its place!

Although his earliest World Seal had come with a blessing of the Windswept Realm's qi flow, at that time... the Windswept Realm hadn't been fundamentally changed, and was still operating as normal!

Therefore, Meng Hao had essentially not taken much, if any, of the Emperor's bait. If he had taken some in, it was only during his acquisition of the final 300 great Daos. And even so, it had been accomplished on his own, and not with the assistance of the Emperor's qi flow.

And that was what gave him a chance to free himself from the chain!

Yuwen Jian was in the same situation. Although his screams were real, the chain was clearly not absorbing him in the same way that it was with the others.

Meng Hao looked up, his expression fierce. "I gained enlightenment of these Daos myself! What makes you think I'll give them to you!?"

Then he threw his head back and roared. His body trembled as his cultivation base exploded with power, his own power, which he used to fight against the chain and the World Essence light.

"What's mine is mine, and definitely not yours!" he roared, and rumbling sounds filled his body. The chain erupted with brilliant light, and all of a

sudden, it seemed that Meng Hao might be able to break free.

The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm gasped in response. Also watching were the figures in the void beyond the huge net, especially the giant three-headed six-armed figure, whose eyes shone with intense killing intent.

“Perhaps these 3,000 great Daos are part of the Windswept Realm, but... in the moment I gained enlightenment of them, they fused into my heart. They... are my Daos!” Intense vibrations wracked his body, and cracking sounds could be heard as the chain shook. As of this point, it seemed incapable of absorbing anything from Meng Hao.

Not only could it not absorb anything from him, what it had already absorbed suddenly began to flow backward and merge back into him! Meng Hao began to glow with azure light, in completely awe-inspiring fashion.

2,995 Essences!

2,996!

2,997!

Meng Hao roared as boundless azure light shone off of him, a representation of the power of an Allheaven Immortal. Power erupted off of him, causing Heaven and Earth to shake violently. From the look of it, the chain was just about to break!

This development caused Zong Wuya to inhale sharply; the Emperor was also shaking, and he turned his sightless eyes in Meng Hao’s direction. Although he wasn’t extremely shocked, his expression was extremely dark. He suddenly looked up at the figures out in the void, and began to chuckle bitterly.

“At this point, you people... still don’t trust me?!”

“The sole World Essence has been unleashed, all you need to do is activate the teleportation portal, and the Windswept Realm... can join you, and leave the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“We’ve already done everything that we can do. Our 3,000 great Daos have been utilized, our only World Essence has become a pillar of light! We’ve sacrificed the Echelon cultivators, and coalesced the willpower of all living things here. How come... you just won’t trust us!? What do we have to do to get you to trust us?!?!”

In response to the Emperor’s voice, the figures behind the black hole in the huge net looked on silently. Various conflicted expressions could be seen on their faces; some were hesitant, and some were smiling coldly.

Even if the black hole had appeared, and even if the teleportation portal had opened, if they weren’t willing... the Windswept Realm could not ascend!

Unless they were completely and absolutely convinced, it didn’t matter that Paragon Sea Dream was weak; they still weren’t willing to make a move, and wouldn’t dare to activate the teleportation portal.

Unfortunately... they didn’t want the Windswept Realm!

By this point, azure light swirled thick around Meng Hao. The chain was vibrating rapidly as he rapidly regained all of his 3,000 great Daos.

2,998 Essences!

2,999 Essences!

3,000 Essences!

In that moment, he raised both hands into the air and stretched them apart. Massive, shocking rumbling sounds echoed out as the chain suddenly collapsed into pieces and exploded!

As the pieces faded away, Meng Hao took a step forward, completely freeing himself from the absorbing power of the World Essence light!

Without the slightest hesitation, he shot toward Yuwen Jian, extended his right hand, and then grabbed onto the chain that was binding him.

“Break!”

BOOM!!

The chain shook for a moment as if it were about to collapse. Yuwen Jian excitedly rotated his cultivation base, joining forces with Meng Hao. The two worked together and, moments later, the entire chain shattered!!

“Many thanks to you, Meng Hao!!” Yuwen Jian said, voice filled with joy. Even as he spoke, Meng Hao was speeding toward Dao-Heaven.

“Don’t thank me. Come on, let’s save everyone!” At this critical juncture, Meng Hao’s choice was not to simply sit around and let the other Echelon cultivators die. He planned to save them!

“Save everyone?” Yuwen Jian asked, staring in shock.

Chapter 1147: Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao

The words were still coming out of Meng Hao's mouth as he shot toward Dao-Heaven, whose face was twisted ferociously as his body withered up. He was the second most powerful next to Meng Hao, but he still had to struggle to lift his head up. When he did, he stared at Meng Hao, a conflicted expression in his eyes.

He watched as Meng Hao approached, grabbed ahold of the chain that bound him and shook it violently, causing a huge tremor to run through it. It seemed like it was already on the verge of exploding.

"Dao-Heaven, help me out here!" Meng Hao growled with a frown.

"Why are you saving me?" Dao-Heaven asked, feeling completely shaken, and initially holding back from cooperating. He was withering rapidly, and his Daos were being sucked away, and yet to him, his pride and dignity were more important than those things.

Meng Hao looked at Dao-Heaven and calmly said, "One day when I reach the pinnacle of everything, I don't want to look back and find myself alone. More important than that, all of us... are from the Mountain and Sea Realm!"

His words caused Dao-Heaven to tremble and stare in shock. Then he closed his eyes for a moment, after which his cultivation base exploded with power. He and Meng Hao worked together to completely shatter the chain.

After Dao-Heaven was freed, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he looked over at Meng Hao with an even more conflicted expression than before.

The fact that Meng Hao had chosen to do what he had left Dao-Heaven completely stunned. He would never have imagined that Meng Hao would save him for such reasons.

"Is it really true that, despite all the competition and fighting, in the end,

we're... on the same team?" he murmured. Finally, he threw his head back and laughed. Then he looked back at Meng Hao with the same complex look in his eyes. However, there was something else there, deep inside, something that had never before existed inside of him.... Admiration!

In Dao-Heaven's entire life, he had never admired anyone, not even Paragon Sea Dream. In his heart, she was simply an expert who was vastly more powerful than him. If there was anyone he could possibly have considered himself to admire, it might have been the statue inside of his Paragon Painting. But now Meng Hao was there in his heart, someone that he truly admired.

He had to ask himself if he would have made the decision to save everyone, were he in Meng Hao's position, but he had to admit that he couldn't.

Suddenly Dao-Heaven turned into a blur as he, along with Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian, quickly set about saving everyone else. Lin Cong looked even more conflicted than Dao-Heaven had. When he saw Meng Hao coming to shatter the chain that bound him, he thought back to everything that had happened between them, and couldn't help feeling a bit guilty.

In truth, there had never been any enmity between the two of them to begin with.

"Thank you," he said gruffly. There were few people in his life to whom he had ever uttered the words 'thank you.'

Han Qinglei was equally conflicted.

"I owe him a life!" he murmured inwardly as he watched the chain shattering. He didn't say anything, but inwardly, he realized that killing people was easy, but saving them was difficult!

That difficulty lay within the heart, within a person's capacity for righteousness. It had to do with one's mental state!

Fundamentally speaking, there were no irreconcilable differences between him and Meng Hao. The only thing that truly existed between

them was competition. However, because no limitations had been placed on that competition, it had escalated to a deadly level.

As Meng Hao went about saving everyone, surprisingly, the Emperor did nothing to interfere. Zong Wuya also stood there silently. By the time Meng Hao had released everyone from the chains, the lands of the Windswept Realm were only 300 meters away from the huge net!

In fact... it was so close it seemed possible to reach out and touch it!

Furthermore... when Meng Hao looked up into the black hole, he could see a blurry figure with three heads and six arms. As soon as he laid eyes on it, his heart trembled.

“It was you who killed my son!” a voice raged. The three-headed six-armed being glared at Meng Hao from behind the huge net.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered coldly, but he didn’t say anything. Dao-Heaven and the others were arrayed behind him. Whether they were willing to admit it or not, as of this moment, Meng Hao was their leader.

At the same time, the black hole formed by the solitary World Essence light was getting bigger. However, it wasn’t nearly big enough to swallow up the entire Windswept Realm.

The Emperor laughed, a shrill laughter filled with decisiveness and madness. At the same time, his obsession deepened.

“My mission in life has been to lead the Windswept Realm away from the Mountain and Sea Realm and into freedom. I will give freedom to all coming generations of the Windswept Realm....

“I have sacrificed everything for that goal, and because of that, I can also give up everything. This was my mission, and my dream....

“Immortals and Devils of the 33 Heavens, you can choose to distrust me, and you can distrust the blood and souls of the lives of the Windswept Realm. You can distrust the Immortals and you can distrust everyone. But there is one thing that you people... must trust!” The Emperor’s murmured words were intermixed with bitter laughter. He suddenly bit down on his tongue, which exploded, creating a chain reaction that destroyed his entire

body.

The only thing which was left was his soul, which began to chant:

“Great sacrifice....

“Soul oath....

“With my soul, I henceforth rebel against the Immortal World!

“With my blood, I henceforth leave the Immortal World!

“With my will, I henceforth defy the Immortal World!

“Henceforth, the Windswept Realm’s wind, snow, sky, land, mountains, rivers, vegetation, and all other living things... defect from the Immortal World!” As the Emperor spoke those words, the Windswept Realm began to vibrate. The rivers turned black, the mountains turned black, and the land turned black.

The wind howled, the snow roared, the land thundered, the mountains howled, the living things and even the vegetation cried out loudly!

All of the cultivators in the Nine Nations of the Windswept Realm dropped to their knees to kowtow, then lifted their heads up and reiterated the words just spoken by the Emperor.

“Henceforth, we... defect from the Immortal World!”

The wind turned black, the snow turned black, the land turned black, the vegetation withered, and at the same time, a black mark appeared on the foreheads of all of the cultivators.

It was... the mark of a traitorous rebel!!

All living things began to speak out the desires of their souls, even the mortals. As they kowtowed, their voices rang out, backed by the power of their blood: “Henceforth, we... defect from the Immortal World!

Black marks appeared on the foreheads of all living things. The cities turned black, as did all other objects within the Windswept Realm. All things... turned pitch black!

Black sky, black lands, black wind, black snow, pitch black upon pitch

black....

The Windswept Realm was now completely different on a fundamental level. Deep inside, they became traitorous rebels, which immediately had an effect on the Windswept Realm's 3,000 great Daos. Those Daos, natural laws, and Essences all became traitorous and rebellious!

The entire will of the Windswept Realm was traitorous and rebellious!

The final thing to be affected was the sole World Essence light, which suddenly turned pitch black!

As soon as the black pillar of light became visible, Meng Hao, Dao-Heaven, and the other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm felt astonishment shaking their hearts. When they looked around them, they saw a world of pitch darkness!

Gradually, an archaic voice could be heard echoing out within the Windswept Realm. That voice seemed to come from the wind, lightning, snow, sky, land, vegetation, and all living things.

"Traitorous Sutra of...

"The Rebel Dao...."

That voice was actually the will of the entire Windswept Realm!

As soon as the voice rang out, the black beam of light pierced through the huge net, causing the black hole to expand even larger. As of this moment, the figures behind the huge net were powerless to do anything about what was happening. Their expressions flickered, and a fanatical greed appeared in their eyes.

"That's...."

"The Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao! Formed from a World Essence... it's the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao!!"

As the voices chorused out, the Emperor continued to speak from his soul, his own voice weak, yet ringing with the sound of obsession.

"33 Heavens, do you... trust us now?!?!"

A thunderous voice replied from the black hole, echoing filling the entire Windswept Realm. “We trust the Windswept Realm! The combined will of the entire Windswept Realm has formed the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. Now... we trust you!!”

At the same time, the black hole began to rapidly increase in size.

In the blink of an eye, it was large enough to swallow up the entire Windswept Realm. This black hole was a one-way teleportation portal, making it possible for the Windswept Realm to enter the 33 Heavens, but preventing the figures from the 33 Heavens from doing anything except wait in excitement for the Windswept Realm to arrive.

The voice continued to speak out from within the black hole, and it trembled with hope and indescribable excitement.

“Windswept Realm, come... bring your... Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao and offer it up to us!

“We promise to make the Windswept Realm the 34th Heaven, and together, we will eternally suppress the Immortal World. Together, we can all enjoy the blessings of the true Dao!”

Simultaneously, the Windswept Realm rumbled as it got closer and closer to the black hole!

Meng Hao shivered and began to breathe heavily. His eyes shone with a bright light as he stared at the black pillar of light. He wasn't sure exactly what was happening, but the complete rebellion of the Windswept Realm had caused the precious World Essence to change, becoming the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. In response... all of the blood in his body began to boil!!

He suddenly thought back to what the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan had said after he had absorbed the Nirvana Fruit. He had spoken of a mystery regarding the bloodline of the Fang Clan! 1

Because of the critical danger he was in, there was no time to ponder the subject at the moment. However, the mere fact that his blood felt like it was burning caused Meng Hao to recall that there was some secret related

to the Fang Clan bloodline. He wasn't sure what it was, but the sensation he was experiencing now caused him to be filled with an incredible thirst!

He thirsted... for that Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao!

It was as if it were something of great importance to Meng Hao, and even more importantly... to the Fang Clan as a whole!

Furthermore, the third Nirvana Fruit in his bag of holding was vibrating strongly, and he had the feeling that if he could get that Sutra, then he... would be able to fully absorb the Nirvana Fruit!!

From that moment on, he would exceed the Allheaven Immortal and become... an Allheaven Dao Immortal!!

Furthermore, buried deep in the Fang Clan blood was something like the key to a great door. Once opened... the future of the Fang Clan would be one of splendor and glory!!

*

1. The first generation Patriarch talked about the Fang Clan bloodline in chapter 1005.

Chapter 1148: You Killed My Son, Prepare To Die!

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red. Although the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao filled him with an intense, indescribable thirst... he had no way to get it!

He was incapable of flying, and it wasn't just him. Dao-Heaven and the other Echelon cultivators, as well as everyone else from the Mountain and Sea Realm, were all similarly stuck. The Windswept Realm was now completely different than before, and all of them were feeling an incredible force of expulsion that made it almost impossible for them to move.

Meng Hao let out a growling shout. He wanted to charge forth, to grab that black beam of light, and thus, the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. Unfortunately, he couldn't.

All he could do was look at the huge net out in the void, and the rapidly expanding black hole into which the Windswept Realm was slowly moving.

There was nothing he could do to stop what was happening, nor any way for him to get the Sutra. In fact, outside of the Windswept Realm, Paragon Sea Dream trembled. She was no longer fighting the Windswept Imperial Lord. He had turned, blood spurting out of various wounds as he fled toward the Windswept Realm. Then, he flew under it and pushed up.

Rumbling could be heard as more of the Windswept Realm was almost completely swallowed up by the black hole!

Paragon Sea Dream sighed, and then waved a finger through the air. Immediately, a white stream of light flew out toward the Windswept Realm. It stabbed through the blackness of the Windswept Realm and then split apart, eventually landing on Meng Hao and all the other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm. It even spread out through the Nine Nations to find the cultivators who hadn't participated in the

war.

One of those beams of light shot into a valley in the Ninth Nation, where a young woman currently sat ashen-faced, sweat dripping down her forehead. From the look of it, she was at a critical juncture in her cultivation, but was being interrupted by the expulsion pressure from the Windswept Realm. As a result, she was incapable of moving. That woman was none other than... Chu Yuyan!

Chu Yuyan had originally been with Meng Hao on the Ninth Nation's National Aura Mountain. However, after being freed from his bag of holding, she had chosen not to stay on the mountain. As soon as Meng Hao began to contemplate enlightenment of the World Seal, she had quietly left.

She had her pride, and it wouldn't let her stick around with Meng Hao like someone who needed protection. Thus, she had departed. Eventually, she had found a valley in the mountains of the Ninth Nation where she quietly began to meditate and attempt to achieve a cultivation base breakthrough, to finally ascend from the Spirit Realm into the Immortal Realm.

And now, the white light from Paragon Sea Dream flew down and covered her.

Suddenly, Paragon Sea Dream's voice echoed in their ears: "All of you, listen to me. Your trials by fire are over. Your excursion into the Windswept Realm has concluded. Nothing can be done to change how things are playing out. Someone went so far as to use the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao to leave the Immortal World.... The 3,000 Lower Realms of the past did exactly the same thing.

"Oh well, I guess that's the end of it...." By the end, Paragon Sea Dream was muttering softly and sounded very disheartened. She made a grasping gesture, and all of the people who were touched by her light began to rise up into the air. Apparently, she was pulling them out of the Windswept Realm before it entered the 33 Heavens, and was going to return everyone to the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Fan Dong'er and the others were the first to fly up into the air, followed by Lin Cong, Han Qinglei, Yuwen Jian and Dao-Heaven.

Then there was Meng Hao. He slowly rose up into the air, and was soon on the verge of being pulled out of the Windswept Realm altogether. However, his gaze was fixed on the black beam of light, which was just about to fully enter the black hole. At that point, the thirst inside him turned ravenous.

"The Windswept Realm excursion... is over...? My blood is boiling! The Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao can help me fuse my third Nirvana Fruit, and it's right there in front of me. Is it really... not connected to me by destiny?" Meng Hao couldn't accept it, and yet had no other options. The expulsion power of the Windswept Realm was too strong, and the pillar of light was actually the source of that power. It was pushing him away so forcefully that he couldn't even approach it.

Furthermore, Paragon Sea Dream was pulling him inexorably away, placing him further and further away from the black pillar of light.

He roared inwardly, his eyes bloodshot as he unleashed all of the power of his cultivation base. Azure light surged out, and blood spurted out of his wounds. Cracking sounds could be heard as injuries were inflicted, all to prevent himself from getting any further away.

However, it was too hard, and he couldn't quite manage to take a step forward toward the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao.

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, Dao-Heaven roared, "Meng Hao... let me help you!"

He was also being slowly pulled away by Paragon Sea Dream, but when he saw the look on Meng Hao's face, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing his cultivation base to erupt with power. He even burned some of his life force as he waved his finger toward Meng Hao, causing an intangible force to slam into him. It was an attack that propelled Meng Hao forward, blood spraying out of his mouth. Instantly, he flew forward several dozen meters, pushing him a bit closer to the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao.

“Meng Hao, I’m gonna help you too!” shouted Lin Cong.

“Me too!” cried Han Qinglei.

“Brother Meng Hao, let me help you too!” Yuwen Jian cried.

Lin Cong threw his head back and roared, waving his hand and causing his cultivation base to ignite. The Underworld appeared, transforming into a force of acceleration that slammed into Meng Hao. Han Qinglei coughed up a mouthful of blood, sustaining a serious injury to summon green lightning; not deadly lightning, but packed with plenty of force.

Yuwen Jian roared as he grew larger, filling himself with Godly power that he used to unleash ten punches in Meng Hao’s direction. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, but for Meng Hao, he was willing to do this.

The combined forces of all three Echelon cultivators transformed into an incredible accelerative force that landed on Meng Hao. A boom rang out as he turned into a beam of light that shot directly toward the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. However... when he was only about thirty meters away, he slowly came to a stop, and could move no further. Once again, Paragon Sea Dream’s convergence beam began to pull him back.

“I refuse to accept this!” he roared. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and yet, there was nothing he could do.

It was at this point that Chu Yuyan appeared in the air above the Ninth Nation, floating up in Sea Dream’s light. She instantly caught sight of Meng Hao, and heard his defiant roar.

Her heart trembled, and she gasped. Then, she bit down on the tip of her tongue and spat out some blood. Gazing deeply at Meng Hao, she waved her hand, causing a crimson medicinal pill to fly out from within her bag of holding. Without the slightest hesitation, she popped it into her mouth.

She instantly began to tremble, and was soaked with sweat. Her cultivation base erupted with power, and she held nothing back. Blood spurted out, forming a haze around her, and she didn’t hesitate for a moment. She was going to... break through to the Immortal Realm and summon the Door of Immortality!

This was the only idea she could think of, and her way of trying to help Meng Hao. Although trying to break through to the Immortal Realm here and now was fraught with innumerable uncertainties, and probably mortal danger, Chu Yuyan didn't worry about any of that.

Her Cultivation base surged as she rapidly grew closer to the Immortal Realm. She wanted to summon the Door of Immortality because its arrival brought with it a boundless power of Heaven and Earth. Perhaps... that power could change the power of expulsion from the Windswept Realm.

It might, it might not. But as long as it held the slightest possibility of being able to help Meng Hao, Chu Yuyan wouldn't hesitate. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and rumbling filled her body. She felt like she was about to explode.

Her face was pale white, but she continued on with her plan, grunting as her qi passageways shattered. The incredible pressure weighing down on her from the world itself was making her breakthrough even harder.

And yet, she did not give up. It didn't matter that she had already flown past him, and that he hadn't even turned to look at her. She continued on.

Once. Twice. Three times....

Just when she was about to depart completely from the Windswept Realm, massive amounts of blood sprayed out from inside her body. Heaven and Earth trembled, and even the black hole out in the void vibrated. Ripples could even be seen on the huge net.

It was at this point that... an enormous, archaic Door of Immortality began to descend from within the void. It flew down toward the Windswept Realm, slamming... right into the black hole!

Clouds and mist appeared, which roiled out in all directions. The archaic Door of Immortality exuded indescribable pressure, a pressure filled with a will of its own and the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm. As it descended, the upward movement of the Windswept Realm suddenly ceased.

Simultaneously, the expulsion power from the Windswept Realm

trembled, as if it were terrified of the pressure from the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Behind the huge net and the black hole, the congregated figures began shouting in rage. Just when the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao appeared in front of them, all of a sudden something unexpected happened.

“NO!!”

“DAMMIT!!”

“I can’t believe someone is making a breakthrough right now, and summoning the Door of Immortality!!”

Some of them could hold back no longer. They unleashed divine abilities and shot into the black hole in an attempt to do something about the Door of Immortality. The Door of Immortality rumbled and distorted.

The expulsion force trembled and ceased operating, giving Meng Hao a hard-won chance. He suddenly shot forward, looking like a figure of blood as he crossed the final thirty meters. When he reached the light that was the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, his blood vessels were boiling madly.

A smile broke out on Chu Yuyan’s face. She was now very weak, and although the Door of Immortality was present, she didn’t have the power to open it. However, she had no regrets.

“See Meng Hao, I can be of help to you!” she murmured.

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, in the same moment that the majestic Door of Immortality appeared, it almost immediately began to grow indistinct. Apparently, because Chu Yuyan couldn’t sustain her current state, because of the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao itself, and because of the actions of the figures inside the black hole, the Door of Immortality faded away in the blink of an eye.

The moment that happened, the expulsion power of the Windswept Realm once again rose up with intensity. At that point, Meng Hao’s hand was only a few inches away from the light of the Traitorous Sutra of the

Rebel Dao!

It was almost within his reach!

And yet, it was as far away as the Heavens!

Meng Hao could move forward no further. In fact, because of the expulsion power, he was actually slowly being pushed back. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, it was at this point that a huge hand suddenly appeared from within the black hole. It was ancient, covered with scales, and bursting with incredible might. It instantly began to reach toward Meng Hao, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

It belonged to none other than the three-headed six-armed figure. He didn't dare to actually descend fully. However, he couldn't hold back from trying to kill Meng Hao, so he stretched out his arm in a deadly attack!

"You killed my son, prepare to die!!" he roared, his voice filled with a murderous aura as it echoed out. Everything shook, and the Windswept Realm was filled with violent vibrations.

Chapter 1149: An Arrow Rocks the Heavens!

Meng Hao's face fell. It wouldn't be impossible to extricate himself from this dangerous situation. After all, he merely had to give up on the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, and then utilize the full power of his cultivation base to cooperate with Paragon Sea Dream. In that case, he would be gone within moments.

Unfortunately, the price to pay for such an action would be that he would forever lose the chance to get the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. Furthermore, it would also be a waste of all the assistance provided by Dao-Heaven and the others, as well as Chu Yuyan's sacrifice.

Those were all things that Meng Hao couldn't accept!

After all, rewards came only with risk. Without the willingness to go all-out, it would be difficult to ever acquire any sort of good fortune that other people couldn't!

Meng Hao's eyes were completely bloodshot. In this critical moment, he clenched his jaw and, instead of falling back or giving up, he extended his hand, within which, shockingly, appeared... his third Nirvana Fruit, glittering and mysterious!

Without a moment's pause, he pushed it down into his forehead. It was absorbed immediately, whereupon rumbling sounds filled him, along with a shocking, explosive power.

The terrifying intensity of the eruption caused Meng Hao to instantly emanate a wild, Quasi-Dao aura, which immediately distorted everything, causing the entire area to twist and ripple.

His body trembled, and blood immediately began to ooze out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. His sole Immortal meridian appeared to have been wiped away, turning his insides into a black hole that began to absorb all auras in the area. Natural laws and Essences all roared toward him.

It was as if he were suddenly ravenously hungry. The sensation was

difficult to endure; he felt as hungry as if he hadn't eaten for thousands of years. He immediately wanted to consume all life, and all the energy in Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao's face went pale; this was his first time absorbing the third Nirvana Fruit, and he had never imagined that it would be like this, that he would be filled with an intense and unendurable hunger. His body trembled and, as if because of the hunger itself, began to wither.

In the same moment, his 33 Heavens also collapsed, transforming into countless fragments that spun through his body. The end result was that he began to emanate a sensation like that of the Dao Realm.

It was... the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm!!

He trembled violently, and blood spurted out everywhere. Forcing himself into the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm was actually far too much of a burden!!

However, within that intense hunger, he also sensed unprecedented power, a power the likes of which was... only half a step away from that of a Dao Realm expert, and comparable to that of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!!

Meng Hao's eyes began to glow with a strange light, and his breathing grew ragged. Resplendent azure light shone off of him in all directions, as if he were a wellspring of azure. The sensation of the Dao erupted off of him, causing wild colors to flash and everything to shake, including the entirety of the Windswept Realm.

When the members of the Echelon, and the other cultivators being pulled away by Paragon Sea Dream, saw what was happening, their eyes went wide and they began to pant, especially Dao-Heaven. They looked on in a daze as these momentously shocking events occurred.

"So before... wasn't his most powerful state!"

"I can't believe... he's so strong!!!" Lin Cong, Han Qinglei and Yuwen Jian were all astonished.

Blood oozed out of Chu Yuyan's mouth as she watched Meng Hao. Her gaze was gentle, and her smile continued to grow wider.

All of a sudden, more of the figures beyond the huge net began to turn their attention to Meng Hao. There were even some who, when they saw the azure light surrounding him, and realized what it meant, began to cry out in shock.

“Allheaven Dao Immortal!!”

However, even as they realized that Meng Hao was in the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm, the gigantic three-headed six-armed figure let out a cold snort. Instead of pausing or slowing down, it moved its hand faster toward Meng Hao.

“You overestimate yourself!” he said with cold disregard. It was as if to him, Meng Hao was nothing more than an ant, and that he was someone vastly more powerful, someone capable of crushing him instantly. His hand made a grasping motion, causing the void to shatter. It was as if the entire area around Meng Hao was about to collapse, burying him in death within the hand.

As the hand rumbled toward him, it was obvious that he could not dodge or resist it. His eyes began to glow with a bright light, and he threw his back and laughed. He could already tell that it wouldn’t be possible to stay in this state for very long; at the most, a few breaths of time.

Within those few breaths of time, he would not be able to do anything significant to the hand stretching out from the black hole. However, his intention was not to personally do something to it.

Meng Hao didn’t feel the slightest fear or dread going up against the massively destructive palm and the pressure it exuded. His pupils shrank as, all of a sudden, he used the power of the third Nirvana Fruit to activate the drop of Paragon Nine Seals’ blood that was inside of him!

That Paragon’s blood had not only helped him absorb his first Nirvana Fruit in the critical moment, it had also merged into his body, making his Demon Sealing Hexing Magic more powerful than before. Furthermore, he had received the ultimate honor of... Paragon Nine Seals’ approval!

Most importantly, because of that approval, the entire Mountain and Sea Realm had been shaken, and Meng Hao... had become the future Lord of

the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Stimulating Paragon Nine Seals' blood was exactly what Meng Hao wanted to do. In this critical moment in which he refused to give up on the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, it was the only thing he could think of to do!

"I'm the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, the final generation of the League of Demon Sealers!

"I am Paragon Nine Seals' successor!

"I am the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"In the future, I will control the fate of the entire Mountain and Sea Realm, as well as... everything within the Mountain and Sea Realm!

"Sun and moon, it doesn't matter whether you used to be Nine Seals' eyes, or former magical items of his. As of this moment, I call upon the authority of my name to order you... to sever this rebel's arm!!" These words were roared inwardly, not spoken out loud. However, in the moment that he stimulated the Paragon's blood inside of him, a connection seemed to form between it and the Mountain and Sea Realm. It was like a passageway linking the words of his heart into all of the Mountains and all of the Seas in the Realm. He was... connected to the very will of the Mountain and Sea Realm!!

He was using his own name to call upon the Mountain and Sea Realm... to control it!

It seemed like an insane plan, but Meng Hao knew that given the situation at hand, in order to become more powerful, if he didn't do something crazy, he wouldn't succeed!!

He threw his head back and roared, stretching both hands out wide as he made his mental call. At the same time, the entire Mountain and Sea Realm suddenly trembled slightly. The nine Mountains swayed and the nine Seas roared. The Xuanwu turtles on top of each Mountain threw their heads up and howled.

It was as if the entire Mountain and Sea Realm had been hit with

massive waves!

The ripples were detectable by Paragon Sea Dream, as well as the figures in the huge net's black hole and the Windswept Imperial Lord. All of their faces flickered in response.

Even more shocking to everyone was that that sun and the moon that normally orbited around the nine Mountains and Seas, suddenly stopped in place. At the same time, an indescribably murderous aura exploded out from them.

As it did, the sun and moon began to shine with resplendent light, and it was gradually possible to see that within the sun... there was a sword. However, that sword rapidly changed shape into a bow!! 1

“Hey... what’s going on?!”

“Dammit, you can’t just stick your hand into the Mountain and Sea Realm! You incited the killing will of Nine Seals’ precious treasure!!”

“Impossible, how could a mere arm provoke such a reaction from Nine Seals’ precious treasure? It shouldn’t even be close to the threshold that sets it off!”

As everyone looked on in astonishment, the three-headed six-armed figure’s eyes went wide, and he experienced an intense sensation of danger. However, instead of pulling his hand back, he gritted his teeth and sent it even more quickly toward Meng Hao, wrapping it around him as if to crush him to death!

“DIE!!” In almost the exact same moment in which he spoke, the light shining from the sun suddenly retracted. The bow automatically pulled taut, causing countless beams of light to be sucked into it. A moment later, the bow was loosened, causing an arrow of light to shoot forth at top speed!

The light arrow moved with incomprehensible speed that exceeded even the Dao Realm. In the space of a single breath, it moved from its position far, far away in the Mountains and Seas, piercing through the void, shaking the Heavens, to appear right outside the Windswept Realm.

It moved faster than lightning, causing a sonic boom to echo out that left the figures in the black hole ashen-faced.

Blood oozed out of the mouth of the Windswept Imperial Lord as the light arrow shot toward the huge hand which was threatening Meng Hao.

The hand was just starting to clench shut, but before it could even touch Meng Hao, the arrow arrived and slashed through it.

A boom rattled out as the gigantic hand was completely destroyed. It couldn't stand up to the light arrow at all; it was like little more than a rotten branch which instantly shattered to tiny pieces which then became ash. However, the effect didn't stop there. It spread out and, unbelievably... pierced into the black hole. To the horror of the enormous three-headed figure, who was now five-armed and fleeing at top speed, the light continued on into his body.

"NO!! Paragon, spare me! Paragon..." The huge figure let out a miserable scream that ended in a grunt as its body exploded, transforming into nothing more than ash.

The entire world was shocked!

That three-headed six-armed individual was something like an Imperial Lord within the 33 Heavens. A powerful figure like that was destroyed by a mere arrow of light, crushed like a dried weed, eradicated from existence. It didn't matter that he was lurking hidden within the black hole; he still met with a fate of complete eradication.

The other figures inside the black hole began to tremble violently. Expressions of terror and astonishment filled their faces, and they almost couldn't believe what was happening. It was almost as if they were thinking about someone from the past, some terrifying figure who haunted their thoughts!

Even as everyone was shaken by the arrow, Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he shot forward toward the light of the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. In the blink of an eye, his hand had stretched out, and made contact with the light!

BOOM!

*

1. The sword in the sun was mentioned in chapter 1056. Some of you might remember the confusion about whether it was a sword or a bow. Now you know why.

Chapter 1150: Allheaven Fang Clan!

When the arrow of light appeared, an arm was destroyed, and then an entire enormous entity was exterminated. Those things caused the light of the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao to grow unstable. It was being interfered with, including by the powerful Door of Immortality. As a result, the power of expulsion coming from the pillar of light temporarily ceased.

Meng Hao used that moment to finally reach his hand out and sink it into the pillar of light that was the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao. Almost as soon as his hand entered the light, Paragon Sea Dream's convergence beam grew a bit stronger.

The intensity was something that no observer would be able to detect, but Meng Hao could feel it, and it caused his eyes to flicker, although he didn't say anything out loud.

The light pulling at him grew more intense. However, it was in that same moment that, because of the effects of the arrow, Meng Hao had a moment to finally stretch out and touch the pillar of light in front of him!

"Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, you belong to me!" he roared, his eyes shining with a bright light as he plunged his hand into the pillar of light.

Shocking rumbling filled the air and everything was shaking. In response to what was happening, the figures inside the black hole began to let out enraged shouts.

"NO!!"

"That doesn't belong to you! Dammit! Let go!!"

"That belongs to the 33 Heavens!!"

Each and every one of the furious shouts rumbled like thunder, causing Meng Hao to shake, and blood to spray out of his mouth. Despite the rage of the figures inside the black hole, none of them dared to emerge from inside. What had happened moments ago with the arrow had frightened any and all courage out of them!

All they could do was use their roars of fury to batter Meng Hao. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, but he was in the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm, and thus, he fought back. His hand didn't stop moving, and as soon as it entered the pillar of light, he made a grasping motion as he took hold of the actual Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao.

In that moment, the blood in his body began to boil even more furiously, as though there were something inside of it that was awakening. Rumbling sounds completely filled Meng Hao's entire mind.

His body roared as the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao was absorbed into him through his right hand.

As that happened, the pillar of light began to weaken. At the same time, the blood inside of him was completely a-boil. Cracking sounds echoed about inside of him, like peals of thunder.

Suddenly, an ancient voice rang out, filled with boundless dignity, a voice that seemed to have existed within Meng Hao's blood itself all along. However, it was only in this moment, because of the absorption of the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, that the voice began to speak. It was as if its words echoed out from the most ancient of times to appear in the modern age.

"Nine ancient surnames; The source of the primeval; Lords of the majestic expanse; The boundless Heaven and Earth... in this era... of the Nine Allheaven Clans, the Fang Clan has taken the lead and tracked down their Essence. In all members of that bloodline, Nirvanic Rebirth exists, and the chakras are opened!"

Almost in the same moment that the voice rang out inside Meng Hao's mind, all of the blood in his body seemed to break down. The Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao then merged into each and every blood cell inside of him, ensuring that every drop of blood thrummed with the same bloodline power!

In that exact same moment, back in the Mountain and Sea Realm, in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, on Planet South Heaven, Meng Hao's father was currently sitting cross-legged in a Tower of Tang, carrying out his pledge

and mission of standing guard over Planet South Heaven.

All of a sudden, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes snapped open. A gleam of shock and confusion ran through him as the blood in his veins apparently began to burn. Gradually, an azure light began to rise up from within him. That azure light was none other than... the light of an Allheaven Immortal!!

Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions. Fang Xiufeng's cultivation base was at the peak of the Ancient Realm, and as of this moment, it was erupting with power. Heaven and Earth flashed with colors, but after a moment, everything settled down. He did not make a cultivation base breakthrough. However, inside of his body, an azure-colored Dao seed had appeared!

That Dao seed was none other than an Allheaven Dao seed. If he cultivated it, then he would be able to tread the Allheaven path, and would eventually become an Allheaven Immortal!

Fang Xiufeng's eyes opened again, his heart trembled, and his face flickered. He was still a bit confused, and couldn't figure out exactly what was happening.

He wasn't the only one experiencing such a thing. In the Emperor Immortal Sect, Meng Hao's sister Fang Yu was currently sitting in secluded meditation. Suddenly, azure light began to glow as an Allheaven Dao seed formed inside of her!

A shockwave blasted out, causing the bald Sun Hai, who was just outside her secluded meditation chamber jabbering on about his love for her, to let out a surprised shout. He was hit as if with a powerful attack, sending him tumbling away, blood spraying from his mouth.

In the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory, everyone with Fang Clan blood in their veins all experienced something similar, causing the glow of azure light to fill Planet East Victory. Fang Wei was surrounded by an azure glow, as was the Grand Elder. The Fang Clan's Dao Realm Patriarchs, and all other members of the Fang Clan, experienced an intangible transformation. It was just as the voice in Meng Hao's mind had said.

Because of the Nirvanic Rebirth, the chakras were opened!

The Fang Clan was the first Allheaven Clan!

Wind screamed through the entire Nine Mountains and Seas. As of this moment, the matter was set... the Fang Clan was certain to rise to prominence. With enough time, they would even be able to rock Lord Ji. Furthermore, if even more time passed, the voice of the Fang Clan would become the most supreme in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, and they would absolutely become the most important clan.

That was because, the Fang Clan was now... an Allheaven Clan!

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was there in the Windswept Realm, rumbling sounds emanating out from him. The third Nirvana Fruit in his forehead did not emerge from within him. Instead, it was madly absorbing the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao and fusing it into Meng Hao.

He was shaking violently, filled with so much force that it seemed like he might explode. Simultaneously, the entire Fang Clan was changing. However, unlike all the other members of the Fang Clan, Meng Hao was not forming an Allheaven Dao seed.

He... had no Dao seed!

That was because the bloodline had been opened due to him. The chakras had been unleashed because of his name. As of this moment, from a bloodline perspective, Meng Hao had exceeded the first generation Patriarch!

He was now the one true patriarch of the Allheaven Fang Clan!

Perhaps his cultivation base wasn't high enough at the moment, and he didn't have sufficient status. However, because of the strength of his bloodline... he was the Patriarch!

The bloodlines of everyone in the Fang Clan had been awakened because of Meng Hao. Furthermore, all members of the Fang Clan now had Allheaven Dao seeds inside of them. Essentially, that was because of the influence of Meng Hao's blood. He was the source of it all!

Furthermore... Meng Hao could even sense the blood of all members of the Fang Clan in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Even more shocking was that, the best way to prove that he really was the Patriarch of the Fang Clan, was that he could actually control the life or death of all members of the Fang Clan!

He could kill any member of the Fang Clan with a single thought. His will reigned supreme over everything. That was a power that came from being an Allheaven Dao Immortal, as well as the Clan Chief of an Allheaven Clan. He had the ultimate power of life and death!

All of this takes quite some time to describe, but occurred in a very short period of time. It took only an instant for the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao to be absorbed and then fade away, having been completely sucked into Meng Hao's hand.

The Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao was now a part of Meng Hao, a key which had unlocked his bloodline and then disseminated that power to all members of the Fang Clan, allowing them to acquire Dao seeds.

At the same time, the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao allowed him to absorb his third Nirvana Fruit, a fusion which was completely different from what had happened with his previous two Nirvana Fruits. Furthermore, the fusion process would take time.

It could take several months for Meng Hao to fully and truly... be an Allheaven Dao Immortal!

In the Mountain and Sea Realm, he would be the one and only... Allheaven Dao Immortal!

He would be a powerful expert on a similar level as Quasi-Dao cultivators. He could even fight with Dao Realm experts. From ancient times until now, that was the ultimate peak of the Immortal Realm!

In the moment that the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao vanished, Meng Hao fell back. Paragon Sea Dream's convergence beam pulled at him, wrenching him backward. As he turned his head, he could see that everyone else had long since left the Windswept Realm.

Even Chu Yuyan had been pulled away by Paragon Sea Dream.

When he saw Chu Yuyan off in the distance, his heart filled with conflicted emotions. Without the help of Dao-Heaven and the other Echelon cultivators, as well as Chu Yuyan's Door of Immortality, he would never have come even close to getting the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao.

His feelings for Chu Yuyan grew even more complicated, and he sighed.

Of all the people from the Mountain and Sea Realm, Meng Hao was the last to leave the Windswept Realm. Just as he was about to leave it completely, he looked back at the soul of the Emperor, and saw him smiling faintly. It was almost as if he didn't care that Meng Hao had taken the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao.

Then he saw the Windswept Imperial Lord, who had a complicated expression on his face.

Finally, he looked at Zong Wuya, standing there in the central temple region. Zong Wuya was looking up at him, an expression of anticipation on his face. Meng Hao could also sense his focus, as if Zong Wuya could almost feel himself experiencing the true Dao.

The black hole in the huge net had long since opened up fully. Despite the fact that there was no Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, the Windswept Realm's path was not hindered. If anything... the mere existence of the Sutra guaranteed that the Windswept Realm would have a place outside the Mountain and Sea Realm, regardless of whether or not Meng Hao took it.

Now that the Windswept Realm was gone, perhaps it would become the 34th Heaven, and perhaps not. It was really impossible to tell at this point.

In any case, to the living beings of the Windswept Realm, this counted as a success. They had finally... escaped the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Boundless rumbling sounds echoed out into the void as Meng Hao flew over the border. Then he watched as the lands were slowly swallowed up into the black hole.

Thunder and wind raged, and then the black hole gradually began to shrink. It disappeared, and the huge net began to fade away amidst crackling thunder and lightning. At that point, Meng Hao could just barely see numerous figures on the other side of the net. All of them stared at him, as well as at Paragon Sea Dream. After a moment, they vanished.

Soon, the huge net was gone, and the only thing visible... was pitch black.

The Windswept Realm was gone....

As for whether or not Zong Wuya would find the true Dao that he was looking for, Meng Hao had no way to know. However, he was very certain that one day, he would personally visit each and every world in the 33 Heavens!

Chapter 1151: Questioning Sea Dream!

The Windswept Realm was gone, no longer a part of the Mountain and Sea Realm. It had departed for all eternity!

Meng Hao looked out into the void, and a profound gleam gradually rose up in his eyes. Then he turned his head as Paragon Sea Dream's convergence light pulled him over to the rest of the group, which was congregated outside of her Immortal's cave.

No one spoke to each other. They watched the Windswept Realm vanish, and then looked on as the void returned to its placid, normal state. There was not a calm heart to be found in the entire lot. Everything that had happened in connection to the Windswept Realm had left deep impressions on them.

They had started out fighting and killing each other, and had ended up working together. When they thought back to everything they had experienced, they sighed ruefully.

Thinking back, their so-called enmities and grudges from before now seemed insignificant.

Lin Cong felt that way, as did Han Qinglei. Even Dao-Heaven felt exactly the same.

As for Yuwen Jian, he had originally come to hate Dao-Heaven because of the death of Hong Bin. However, after seeing Hong Bin's soul, he understood that Hong Bin's true killer was the Emperor.

They stood there thoughtfully, the events that had just occurred playing out in their minds. Those things were not matters which could be easily forgotten; they were now branded into their souls. After all, they had just witnessed something completely unheard of: an outright rebellion!

Nothing like this had happened in the Mountain and Sea Realm for countless years. However, all the people present had just gone through that very experience. In fact, had Paragon Sea Dream not used her convergence beam just now, all of them would have been taken along with

the Windswept Realm to the 33 Heavens....

The Echelon cultivators were able to wrap their minds around the events better than the others. After all, their understanding of matters regarding the Mountain and Sea Realm exceeded that of ordinary cultivators. However, the other cultivators present were shaken to the core.

Heavens existed beyond what they imagined could exist. Any person who came to know about such a thing would definitely be struck by massive waves of astonishment.

Meng Hao turned away from the void to look at Chu Yuyan. She looked away, and even backed up a few steps, acting as if she had no desire to have any contact with him. He stood there silently for a moment, until all of a sudden, footsteps could be heard from within the Immortal's cave. A woman walked out, and that woman was not Paragon Sea Dream. It was Li Ling'er. She looked different than she had before, more elegant, as if she had cast off all mortal elements.

When she walked out, Lin Cong and the others solemnly clasped hands and bowed deeply. Even Dao-Heaven bowed. However, Fan Dong'er's and Chu Yuyan's eyes went wide, and they stared at Li Ling'er in disbelief.

Meng Hao didn't bow. After all, he had essentially handed Li Ling'er over to Paragon Sea Dream. How could he possibly bow to her?

Li Ling'er glared grudgingly at Meng Hao for a moment, then swept her gaze over the others.

"Hear Paragon Sea Dream's orders," she said coolly. "What occurred with the Windswept Realm is no business of yours. News of this matter must not be spread beyond this group. Not one scrap of news! To have been able to witness these events counts as amazing good fortune for all of you. She hopes that all of you will continue to practice cultivation and find the proper path. When all of you have entered the Ancient Realm, the time to carry out the plan will have arrived!" Then she waved her hand, and a white vortex appeared off to the side.

"Enter the vortex and you will return from whence you came!"

There were quite a few people present, including Dao-Heaven and the Echelon cultivators, as well as Fan Dong'er and the others. However... of the original group of nearly one hundred people, there were now barely over a dozen left.

All of them clasped hands toward the Immortal's cave and bowed silently. Lin Cong was the first to approach the vortex. He stopped in front of it and turned back to look at Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao," he said, his voice calm and sincere, "I'll be waiting for you in the Fourth Mountain. Xu Qing... is there too. When you come, I'll definitely challenge you to a fight. Afterward, you and I will be friends!"

"When I get back to the Fourth Mountain, the first thing I'm going to do is go find Xu Qing, and tell her... that I saw you. Is there... anything you'd like me to tell her?"

"If it's not too much trouble, Elder Brother Lin," Meng Hao replied softly, "please tell Xu Qing... that I haven't forgotten our agreement!" He waved his hand, causing a medicinal pill to fly out toward Lin Cong.

It was a Cosmetic Cultivation Pill.

"Please give that to her for me."

Lin Cong grabbed the pill and nodded. Then he turned, stepped into the vortex, and vanished.

Next was Han Qinglei. He looked over at Meng Hao with a complex expression, then shook his head, chuckling bitterly.

"You might be surnamed Meng, but thankfully you aren't connected to the Meng Clan from the Eighth Mountain...."

"Perhaps... I am," Meng Hao replied, a strange expression on his face.

Han Qinglei blinked in shock, staring back at Meng Hao for a moment. Finally, he sighed, unsure of what else to say. He clasped hands, then stepped into the vortex and disappeared.

After that was Yuwen Jian. He walked up to Meng Hao, clasped him by the shoulders, and looked him in the eyes. Meng Hao laughed and pulled

him into a bear hug.

“Don’t forget to come to the Sixth Mountain to see me,” Yuwen Jian murmured. “I’ll take you to the God Graveyard, where you can find... God’s Blood!” Laughing, he turned and headed toward the vortex.

Just before stepping in, he shouted: “Oh, I’m taking this battle-axe with me!”

Then he jumped into the vortex and vanished, as if he were worried that Meng Hao would veto the idea.

Meng Hao stared in shock. He had completely forgotten about that battle-axe, and now that it had been brought up again, a wave of pain washed through him. However, he could do nothing but chuckle wryly.

“Meng Hao!” Dao-Heaven said, looking Meng Hao in the eyes.

“I’m happy to have come to the Windswept Realm, to have been able to bear witness to Heavens beyond what we imagined could exist. Furthermore, you have helped me to understand... that a person exists beyond what I imagined could exist.

“You wiped away my Paragon magic, and after a lot of thought, I’ve come to realize that the reason... is because I wasn’t qualified to control it!

“In the end, you saved me. And yet, I will still challenge you to a fight one day. If you beat me, I’ll challenge you a second time. If you beat me again, I’ll challenge you a third time. I’ll keep on challenging you forever until I defeat you!

“Also, don’t think that you’re really the number one cultivator in the Echelon. The Echelon originally had thirteen members. However, even including Hai Dongqing, only ten came to the Windswept Realm.

“There are another three, and they... are people you need to watch out for. Those three... are completely... terrifying!” Dao-Heaven had to pause for a moment before uttering the final word, ‘terrifying’.

Considering how arrogant he was, it was obviously difficult for him to say such a thing.

Meng Hao stared in shock.

“Completely terrifying?”

“To be more accurate, they are not of the current generation of the Echelon....” Dao-Heaven looked over at the Immortal’s cave with what seemed like fear, as if he had just realized something important. Then he looked back at Meng Hao, and their eyes met. Meng Hao could clearly see a certain helplessness in Dao-Heaven’s eyes, as well as a smoldering fury. Finally, Dao-Heaven stepped into the vortex and vanished.

Fan Dong’er left, as did Bei Yu and everyone else. Chu Yuyan left too; the entire time, she avoided Meng Hao’s gaze and wouldn’t even speak a single word to him.

Finally, Meng Hao stood there alone. Instead of leaving, though, he turned toward the Immortal’s cave.

“Paragon Sea Dream, you owe me an explanation!” His tone of voice was both awe-inspiring and icy. He had never spoken to her in such a way before. The previous two times they had met, he had been cautious and solemn. Now, though, his heart burned with fury, and therefore, the words he spoke to Paragon Sea Dream didn’t contain any of the respect that they had in the past.

“How dare you!!” Li Ling’er said, clearly shocked by his words. Her eyes went wide as she stared at Meng Hao. Despite the fact that she had just shouted, she quickly gave him a series of very meaningful looks, as if to remind him not to offend Paragon Sea Dream.

Meng Hao completely ignored her hints, and glared icily at the Immortal’s cave.

After a long moment, Paragon Sea Dream’s icy voice rang out from within the Immortal’s cave. It sounded merciless and cold. “You forget your true standing. There are a lot of Chosen in the Mountain and Sea Realm. Perhaps I should get rid of you.”

“Meng Hao,” exclaimed Li Ling’er, “what makes you think you can talk to Paragon Sea Dream like that!? Apologize immediately!” She anxiously

turned to the Immortal's cave and clasped hands. "Master, please calm yourself. After the drastic upheavals in the Windswept Realm, Meng Hao was just confused and made a slip of the tongue. Please forgive him this once."

"Consider that Ling'er has interceded, I'll ignore this matter, Meng Hao," Sea Dream said calmly. "However, if it happens again, then I'll strip away your Echelon mark. If you still have the gall, try to speak to me like that a third time, then I'll cut you down where you stand."

Li Ling'er breathed a sigh of relief, then turned to glare at Meng Hao. She was just about to say something, when Meng Hao laughed. It was a loud laugh, filled with pride, and lacking the slightest tone of compromise. In fact, it even seemed domineering.

"I forgot my standing? You know full well where I stand, Paragon Sea Dream!

"You also knew exactly what was going on with the Windswept Realm. I don't mind being used, but when I get used... it better not be for free!

"Even more intolerable was that when I was trying to acquire some good fortune that was mine by right, you tried to stop me!

"Paragon Sea Dream, why exactly do you think it's unreasonable for me to ask for an explanation!?" As Meng Hao's voice rang out, Li Ling'er's eyes widened with shock. His words left her completely speechless.

A long moment passed in which no voice came out of the Immortal's cave. Finally, a white light began to shine as Paragon Sea Dream emerged in her white robes. As she stepped out, the void grew brighter, and a pressure radiated out that Meng Hao hadn't felt the previous two times they had met.

That pressure was the pressure exuded by a Paragon. It was as if a single thought from her could cause Heaven and Earth to collapse, or cause eras of time to pass. She looked coldly at Meng Hao and said, "You really do have some guts."

Her words caused Meng Hao's heart to tremble. He staggered backward

several steps, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. However, azure light suddenly exploded off of him, stimulating the blood of Paragon Nine Seals inside of him. The entire Mountain and Sea Realm trembled, and the sun and moon stopped in place. In that instant, a will of slaughter seemed to lock onto Paragon Sea Dream!

“That’s right, I do!” Meng Hao said through clenched teeth.

A tremor ran through Paragon Sea Dream, and she couldn’t prevent her expression from turning serious as she looked at him.

“Well, I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she said calmly. Off to the side, Li Ling’er’s heart was pounding wildly. Although she hadn’t been accompanying Paragon Sea Dream for a long time, she was well aware of how easily her temper flared. She never took time to explain herself to people, and now she had uttered this one sentence. Although it didn’t seem like an explanation, the fact that she said it spoke volumes.

Meng Hao looked at Paragon Sea Dream for a moment, then suddenly said, “I met a young woman who called herself the successor of Immortal Ancient. Her name was Xue’er. I would very much like you to explain, Paragon Sea Dream, why... you didn’t extract her from the Windswept Realm! Why did you... let her go with the Windswept Realm into the 33 Heavens!?”

Chapter 1152: An Act!

Paragon Sea Dream's response to Meng Hao's words was an icy face. She didn't speak, and in fact, almost seemed indifferent.

"Perhaps the Door of Immortality collapsed because of the power of that black hole," Meng Hao said, looking calmly at Paragon Sea Dream.

"However, the moment it did collapse, the power of your convergence beam definitely grew stronger." Clearly, Meng Hao had no intention of backing down. That was Meng Hao: you could use him, but you had to pay the price. He didn't do things for free!

"In fact, when I decided to go after the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, your main intention lay in obstructing my way!

"If you try to tell me that you didn't know that the rebellion was going to happen, Paragon Sea Dream, well then let me tell you, I wouldn't believe you for a second!

"Perhaps the Emperor's betrayal was real, but don't try to convince me that the Windswept Imperial Lord was also a traitor!" Meng Hao spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron, and his eyes flashed like lightning. Even still, he carefully observed Paragon Sea Dream's expression in response to his words. Although he spoke very decisively, he actually wasn't completely confident. There had definitely been signs here and there that something strange was going on. In fact, Dao-Heaven had also picked up on them. In the moment before he left, when he looked at Meng Hao, both of them had understood the deeper meaning in his eyes. However, there was no hard evidence.

"Hogwash!" Paragon Sea Dream said. She extended her right hand, causing a fierce wind to pick Meng Hao up and carry him toward the teleportation vortex. Clearly, she meant to send him away.

As he was forced back, azure light sprang up, and his eyes glittered. His cultivation base erupted with power as he fought back. However, despite being an Allheaven Dao Immortal, when tangling with a Paragon, he was simply incapable of doing anything. As he was swept closer to the vortex,

he roared and called upon the blood of Paragon Nine Seals. The Mountain and Sea Realm shook. The sun and moon trembled, and Meng Hao ground to a halt at the edge of the vortex. Even so, he was still being pushed inexorably back.

“It wasn’t just me who didn’t believe it all,” he continued immediately. “Even the 33 Heavens probably didn’t believe. That’s why, from beginning to end, they just sat around watching. Not a single one of them made a move.

“It wasn’t until the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao appeared that they got excited. That was when they started getting greedy. Considering their cultivation bases and how intelligent they are, the Windswept Realm will surely be put under strict oversight.” However, Paragon Sea Dream had already turned to head back into her Immortal’s cave. It was as if she was certain the flick of her sleeve would send Meng Hao into the vortex and away from this place, as if it were completely impossible for him to remain behind.

She saw him inching closer and closer to the vortex, and could sense the teleportation power building up. Meng Hao’s eyes flashed with determination.

“Battle Weapon!” he said, smacking his bag of holding and causing the copper mirror to fly out. Although the copper mirror seemed completely ordinary, as soon as it appeared, Meng Hao rotated his cultivation base, causing azure light to stream into the mirror. Instantly, the mirror... began to melt!

It became a bronze liquid which then began to flow out to cover Meng Hao’s hand. 1 Seemingly sentient, the liquid continued to expand until it reached his elbow. In the blink of an eye, his entire forearm and hand transformed into a meter-long blade!

It was bronze, and radiated an archaic air, as if it had existed for countless years. Gradually, it began to emanate starlight, almost like a gem, as if it were the most important object in the world!

The surface of the blade was as shiny as a mirror, and shone with icy

light that seemed capable of slicing through all living things. It also emanated an air of incredible mystery.

An indescribable aura erupted from his forearm, a subtle aura that caused the teleportation vortex to emit cracking sounds, as if it were icing over and couldn't operate.

All of the natural law and Essence in the nearby void was shattered. Invisible ripples began to emanate out, with the sharp blade being at the center. It was if wherever the ripples passed, the void was still the void, and yet, was also no longer the void!

The strangeness of what was happening caused Paragon Sea Dream to suddenly stop mid-turn. A tremor ran through her, and she turned back to look at Meng Hao's right forearm. Her face flickered through several emotions.

"Allheaven Dao Immortal," she murmured. "So you've already reached the point of activating the second state!" Her words caused Meng Hao's eyes to flicker imperceptibly, although, he had long since come to suspect that she actually knew about the copper mirror.

Li Ling'er's eyes were wide as saucers, and she slowly began to back up. The sharp blade on Meng Hao's right arm filled her with shock. It was like looking at countless stars falling from the sky, and at the same time, hearing innumerable voices roaring angrily in her ears.

Meng Hao's right forearm had transformed into a sharp blade, with nine serrations that looked like waves. It was a shocking sight, a blade that essentially had nine tips!

This was the second state of Meng Hao's copper mirror, the Battle Weapon!!

As the parrot had said before, once Meng Hao reached the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm, he could cause the copper mirror to reach its second state. Now Meng Hao had reached exactly that stage, although the fusion with his third Nirvana Fruit was only fifty percent complete, not one hundred percent!

An explosive sensation radiated out from Meng Hao's right hand, something almost beyond his control. He began to pant as he suddenly realized that it now felt possible for him to slash open the 33 Heavens!

It was a feeling of intense and shocking power, a feeling that caused him to tremble, and made him feel like he was about to lose control. He forced himself away from the vortex, and then, the Battle Weapon vanished, transforming once again into a copper mirror which came to rest on Meng Hao's hand.

He knew that although he could now turn the copper mirror into a Battle Weapon, he was still incapable of unleashing a single strike from the blade. Perhaps... that would only happen when he was equipped with the full power of the Allheaven Dao Immortal. Maybe then he would be qualified to wield the blade!

Perhaps swinging that blade would completely drain his cultivation base. However, a single swipe would definitely cause all the Heavens to lose their light, and would eradicate all life. It would shatter natural laws and crush Essences.

Meng Hao almost couldn't wait for that time. Panting, he waved his hand, sending the copper mirror away and looking at Paragon Sea Dream, who wore a complex, confused expression.

Paragon Sea Dream had been staring at the copper mirror, and after he put it away, she continued to stand there silently.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Eyes shining brightly, he once again spoke: "Paragon Sea Dream, I hadn't finished speaking yet. Now that the Windswept Realm has entered the 33 Heavens, the person who will be most suspect is the Windswept Imperial Lord. In fact, I'm afraid he will lose any and all freedom. To him, having the Windswept Realm become the 34th Heaven is... a huge gamble!

"In fact, it seems almost a certainty that the gambit will fail. And yet, he still went through with it!

"And that's because the entire thing was an act!

“Presumably, the reason you didn’t bring Xue’er back is because she is your ace in the hole!”

Paragon Sea Dream watched the copper mirror vanish, then looked at Meng Hao with a strange, complex expression. A long moment passed. Finally, she said, “Well then, why do you think I would have done all those things?” This was the first time she directly responded to his questions!

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed slightly and he took a deep breath.

“The reason for your actions, Paragon Sea Dream, most likely has something to do with the plan you mentioned. I am quite confident that the Windswept Realm, and Xue’er, have been sent off for one purpose and one purpose only!

“To create a teleportation portal!”

After a moment of silence, Paragon Sea Dream said, “You are both right and wrong.”

She gave no indication as to which part of what he had said was correct, and which was not. However, despite the fact that she had only responded with a single sentence, it still went to show that Meng Hao had forced her to provide an explanation.

She could not ignore Meng Hao’s existence. Regardless of whether it was because of his status as Nine Seals’ successor, or because he was the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, or because... the Battle Weapon had appeared. All of those things caused her to look at Meng Hao with a profound gleam in her eyes.

Although she didn’t care much about him in terms of cultivation base, there was too much Karma on him that forced her to provide a word of explanation.

Meng Hao didn’t ask any followup questions. He didn’t actually want to know what part of what he had said was correct, and what was incorrect. Eyes glittering, he clasped hands and bowed to Paragon Sea Dream.

Clearing his throat, and also looking a bit uncomfortable and bashful, he then said, “All of that was merely speculation on my part, Senior. I was

acting a bit emotionally earlier, and said some offensive things. Please don't take offense, Paragon Sea Dream. However, all of that was because I very nearly died on numerous occasions, and something like that is very difficult to deal with. Junior faced many life-or-death situations in the Windswept Realm, and each time, there were nineteen lamentations that flashed through my mind. Each time I thought of those nineteen lamentations, it felt like my heart was being stabbed by a knife. The first lamentation has to do with the fact that I haven't been able to get a piece of the Ruins of Immortality to take with me. If I had, I could have died in the Windswept Realm without any regrets." His expression now was completely different than before.

It was as if he had just traveled in a big, meandering circle, as if he had shown fury, indignation, and even allowed his energy to surge, all for this moment, all for setting up the words he had just uttered.

Paragon Sea Dream had a strange expression on her face as she said, "A piece of the Ruins of Immortality?"

Meng Hao cleared his throat again. Feeling a bit embarrassed, he sighed.

"Paragon Sea Dream, I would like to request that you help me with this first lamentation of mine. Every time I see the Ruins of Immortality, I can't help but consider the past magnificence of the Paragon Immortal Realm. Then I started thinking that, if I could just have a piece of the Ruins of Immortality as a keepsake, then it would really be a big motivation in my cultivation. It would help me to progress, and to—" Before Meng Hao could finish speaking, Paragon Sea Dream waved her hand through the air, causing massive rumbling sounds to fill the air. At the same time, a giant rift was torn open.

That rift appeared to lead to another world.

It was one of the Ruins of Immortality. The Ruins of Immortality were huge, and were scattered throughout the Mountain and Sea Realm. Each and every part of was swathed in mystery. Right now, the piece Meng Hao was staring at looked almost like a continent. Suddenly, on one corner, it appeared as if an enormous hand were ripping off one section. Rumbling

sounds echoed out as a 30,000-meter section of land slowly separated, and then flew toward the rift.

An ancient aura spread out, along with ripples of Time. There was also a one-of-a-kind Immortal air that caused Meng Hao's heart to thump with excitement!

*

1. When you combine the character azure with copper, you get the word for bronze.

Chapter 1153: Too Kind-Hearted, Too Honest!

The Ruins of Immortality were crumbled remnants of the Immortal World. They were a place that even ordinary Dao Realm experts couldn't make budge, let alone carve up to take away as a keepsake. All they could do would be to look at the ruins floating there for all eternity.

Only powerful experts like the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas might be qualified to take a chunk of the Ruins of Immortality. For example, the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan had taken a piece of the Ruins of Immortality to house his mausoleum.

When Meng Hao saw a 30,000-meter chunk of the Ruins of Immortality floating his way, his heart began to palpitate with eagerness, and his throat went bone dry. This piece wasn't as big as the one taken by the first generation Patriarch, but it was still about thirty percent as large, which was huge.

Forgetting anything else about it, the sheer size was such that, if you used it to crush someone, the effect would be monumentally shocking.

"What a treasure!" Meng Hao immediately stretched out his hand to grab it.

In almost the exact same moment, as the chunk of the Ruins of Immortality flew toward him through the void, causing everything to rumble and shake, and sending out shocking ripples, the piece began to shrink.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed, and he murmured inwardly that Paragon Sea Dream really was considerate. His heart was going wild with joy. It flew down toward him, shrinking until it was the size of a hand, that then floated down toward his palm.

Then it landed, and an expression of delight appeared on his face. However, an instant later, his expression fell as he realized that he couldn't hold it. It immediately began to drop down; although it had

changed in size, its weight was exactly the same as when it was 30,000 meters wide!

This was no ordinary piece of land, it was a remnant of the Immortal World!! You could say that it was... a continent from the Immortal World!!

A huge rumbling sound echoed out, as the incredible weight caused cracking sounds to ring out from Meng Hao's hand. Suddenly, the land mass fell out of his hand, spinning down into the void below. Although the void seemed bottomless, as Meng Hao saw the precious treasure of the Ruins of Immortality getting further and further away, his eyes became shot with blood. Without the slightest hesitation, he flew downward in pursuit.

"Just because you can't keep ahold of it doesn't mean I never gave it to you," said Paragon Sea Dream. "The land in the Ruins of Immortality is imbued with the power of the former Paragon Immortal Realm. It is inherently... a precious treasure. That part I gave you wasn't even very big, and yet it weighs about as much as... one tenth of Planet East Victory!

"Consider that your reward for what happened in the Windswept Realm. As for whether or not you can keep ahold of it, that will depend on you." As soon as her cold words entered his ears, Meng Hao started feeling incredibly irritated.

Li Ling'er stood next to Paragon Sea Dream, a strange expression on her face. She looked at Meng Hao disappearing down below, and then back at Paragon Sea Dream. After blinking a few times, she smiled, but held back from laughing.

Meng Hao was extremely angry, and his heart fairly dripped with blood. If that piece of the Ruins of Immortality had never belonged to him to begin with, then it wouldn't matter if it were lost. But Paragon Sea Dream had actually given it to him; the problem was that he couldn't hold onto it. Seeing it fall away into the distance felt like a knife slashing at his heart.

There was little time to consider matters carefully. Azure light sprung up around him, and he even used the Allheaven Dao Immortal power from the third Nirvana Fruit in his forehead. He shot down with incredible

speed.... As he pursued the piece of the Ruins of Immortality, he transformed into an azure roc, increasing his speed until he sped down like lightning.

“Get back here! You’re mine. MINE!” Meng Hao’s eyes were bright red, and his heart was wracked with intense pain. Perhaps because of his intense, unyielding attitude, and his incredible frustration, he shot along with explosive, incredible speed that he couldn’t normally match even if he were fleeing for his life. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he got closer and closer to the descending piece of the Ruins of Immortality.

As of this moment, he was completely focused on the piece of the Ruins of Immortality. Booms echoed out as he unleashed various divine abilities and Daoist magics. He went all out for the time it takes an incense stick to burn before finally catching up. Then, he stretched out his hand and made a grasping motion toward the descending piece of the Ruins of Immortality.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the descending piece of the Ruins of Immortality stopped in place. With rapid speed, and not holding back the slightest bit of power, he did the same thing over and over again. It wasn’t easy, but eventually, the piece of the Ruins of Immortality transformed into a beam of light that flew into his bag of holding.

Although Paragon Sea Dream hadn’t warned Meng Hao about how heavy it was, she had said that she would give him the piece of the Ruins of Immortality, and she wouldn’t lie. Thus, although it was incredibly heavy, it had been changed by her powerful magic so that it could be stored inside his bag of holding.

Thanks to Paragon Sea Dream’s magical alteration, the land mass which weighed as much as one tenth of Planet East Victory didn’t weigh anything at all inside his bag of holding.

Meng Hao breathed a sigh of relief, then flew rapidly back up. Soon, he was back at his original altitude, only to find that Paragon Sea Dream was long gone. Both Li Ling’er and the Immortal’s cave were nowhere to be seen, and the only thing that remained behind was her echoing voice.

“That mirror is inauspicious. It will harm its owner. It appeared first in ancient times, and now it appears again.”

Other than the voice, the only thing in the area was the lone ice-bound teleportation vortex, which slowly started spinning as the ice thawed, waiting for him to enter. Meng Hao looked around in shock.

The Immortal’s cave was gone, Li Ling’er was gone, and Paragon Sea Dream was actually... gone!

“Where are they? They left? She did this on purpose! Definitely on purpose!” From Meng Hao’s expression, it looked like he was about to blow his top.

“I had nineteen lamentations! I, I... I only got to the first one! Paragon Sea Dream, where did you sneak off to? Huh? This is wrong, you hear me!? This is so unreasonable! It’s not like I was being greedy! I only had nineteen lamentations, that’s not very many!” Meng Hao was very depressed, and then, he was filled with regret as he realized that he hadn’t spoken quickly enough. If he had known things would turn out this way, he would have mentioned all the other eighteen lamentations at the same time. That would have been the best thing to do.

“She’s a Paragon, a majestic Paragon! It wasn’t easy to gain this chance to ask for reasonable compensation, and in the end, she pulled a fast one!

“If I was acting super greedy, that would have been a different story, and I couldn’t hold it against her for leaving. But I wasn’t being greedy at all! The only thing I mentioned was nineteen lamentations! Anyone else would probably have mentioned a hundred, or even a thousand!

“Ai. The world nowadays doesn’t have as many people as honest and dependable as me. That’s why I end up getting bullied. These people are ridiculous! It’s like they specialize in picking on honest people!” Meng Hao was furious, but there was nothing he could do other than let out continuous sighs of regret.

“Well, at least I was able to get some of the Ruins of Immortality. When the time comes, I’ll head back to Planet East Victory and finally be able to safely take away the battle golem Stepdad Ke gave me.” Having reached

this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao felt a bit better. However, he still couldn't stop thinking about how unfair it was for Paragon Sea Dream to bully an honest person like himself.

Frowning resentfully, he stepped into the vortex, which rumbled with the power of teleportation for a moment before he vanished. Then, the vortex slowly faded away, leaving behind not a single trace.

The matter of the Windswept Realm was now completely concluded.

Henceforth, there would be no Windswept Realm in the void of the Mountain and Sea Realm. It had vanished for all eternity. The Nine Seas God Worlds would no longer be able to host trials by fire in the Windswept Realm.

Only the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto retained their unique worlds.

Meanwhile, a black-robed figure was strolling thoughtfully through the starry sky in the Mountain and Sea Realm. He passed cultivators, passed Mountains and Seas, passed through the void, and yet, no one could see him. He was like a lonely soul drifting about through the Mountains and Seas....

In the moment that the Windswept Realm entered the 33 Heavens, in a location far out in the boundless starry sky, the stars in two different areas were trembling violently as two powerful forces rumbled along.

They were far, far away from the Mountain and Sea Realm. However, the exact distance away didn't matter, as they were... getting closer and closer!

Meanwhile, back near the border of the Ninth Sea of the Mountain and Sea Realm, ripples suddenly spread out. They grew more intense, gradually forming together into a vortex. Meng Hao stepped out and looked around. Based on the familiar sights around him, he instantly recognized the Ninth Sea.

"Finally... I'm back," he murmured. He thought back to everything that had happened in the Windswept Realm, and he sighed inwardly. Then he looked up into the void and thought about Zong Wuya.

"I wonder whether or not he found his true Dao...." he thought, shaking his head slowly. After standing there for a moment, his eyes glittered.

"The Ninth Mountain and Sea is my home. Unfortunately... I need to leave now. Xu Qing is in the Fourth Mountain and Sea, and I need to go find her, fulfill our agreement, and bring her back here!" His eyes shone with a bright light. His trip to the Windswept Realm had brought him incredible good fortune. He had fully absorbed a Nirvana Fruit, begun the process of becoming an Allheaven Dao Immortal, and gotten some important clues about Xu Qing. Along with all of that came the qualifications to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

His path, and his world, was no longer limited to the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He would go... to see a much wider and larger world!

"I need to make my stack of promissory notes MUCH thicker!" he thought, his passion rising.

"Echelon cultivators. Chosen. It doesn't matter who. I'm going to make everyone in my generation in the Mountain and Sea Realm all owe me money! And then... I'll get to work on the older generation! I'll... get them to owe me money too!

"Then I'll have become the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm in my own style!" Meng Hao felt as though his ambitions were definitely set high. He had a huge task ahead of him, but he was sure that he could succeed.

Eyes shining, he flickered as he flew off into the distance.

"Ever since leaving Planet South Heaven, I haven't had a chance to go back and visit mom and dad. Plus there's my big sister.... I definitely have to go to Planet South Heaven to say bye to mom and dad before I leave.

"Planet South Heaven.... There's also the Essence of Divine Flame there. I'm definitely going to go back to challenge that place again!" Meng Hao shot forward at top speed, a bright streak of light that headed in the direction of Planet South Heaven.

"Besides, now that I've decided to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea, I

should go settle some debts. I have a lot of promissory notes, and now's the time to collect on them all!" Meng Hao was starting to feel like he was too softhearted. Whenever he saw people with no money, he would always take pity on them, and wouldn't force them to pay back what they owed him, except perhaps some interest.

"This time, no more Mr. Nice Guy!" he berated himself. "Ah, Meng Hao, you really are far too kind-hearted!"

Chapter 1154: Heavencloud Bazaar

Feeling extremely idealistic and kindhearted, and sighing at how honest and sincere he was, Meng Hao looked around without the slightest flush on his face. Of course, there was no one to see him. After clearing his throat again, he turned into a bright beam of light that shot off into the distance.

What Meng Hao didn't know was that in the very instant in which he had returned to the Ninth Mountain and Sea, all of the members of the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory felt their hearts tremble. It was as if some indescribable pressure had suddenly descended upon them. Even the Dao Realm Patriarchs who were meditating awoke from their trances.

It was a tug that came from their bloodline. It was... a power that existed in Meng Hao's blood now that he was the true Patriarch of the Fang Clan, a power that caused faint and yet unmistakable pressure within the clan members. With that power, Meng Hao truly controlled the fate of the Fang Clan!

As of now, Meng Hao was so powerful that it was impossible to even compare to how he was when he had first left for the Windswept Realm. He had begun to absorb his third Nirvana Fruit with the help of the Traitorous Sutra of the Rebel Dao, although the fusion wasn't complete, and would take more time.

It wouldn't take too long, though. At the least, a few months, and at the most, a year. When that time came, he would truly be in the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm. Quasi-Dao experts wouldn't faze him, and he would even be qualified to fight early Dao Realm experts!

From the creation of the Mountain and Sea Realm until this day, he was the first... to take the Immortal Realm to the ultimate pinnacle. He was the only person who, while in the Immortal Realm, could actually fight someone in the Dao Realm!

His eyes filled with anticipation, and his speed increased. Rumbling sounds surrounded him as he sped through the starry sky in the direction

of Planet South Heaven.

“My third Nirvana Fruit will definitely finish fusing. Now I need to start thinking about my fourth Nirvana Fruit. When I fully absorb that one, then I’ll be in a position to try to step into the Ancient Realm!

When I open the Door of the Ancient Realm and summon Soul Lamps, then both my fleshly body and my cultivation base will be in the Ancient Realm. Then... I won’t just be able to fight evenly with experts of the early Dao Realm. I’ll... be able to beat them!” Meng Hao was starting to feel more and more confident about himself, and become even more domineering.

Although he did not quite exude a natural air of dignity, this domineering confidence gave him a distinctive awe-inspiring demeanor.

His speed gradually increased as he shot through the starry sky. Back when he first started his journey among the stars, if he had tried to travel from his current location all the way back to Planet South Heaven, it would have taken far, far too long. Even using teleportation portals, it would have taken several months.

But now, even without the use of teleportation portals, it would only take about a month. However, Meng Hao didn’t plan to do that. Naturally, using teleportation portals was the best thing to do.

Three days later, he found himself just outside of an asteroid field. Some of the asteroids were large, some were small. The largest were hundreds of thousands of meters wide, the smallest didn’t even measure a few hundred meters. There were several hundred in total, all densely packed together.

Asteroid fields like this one were relatively common in the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The asteroids tended to group together, making them very suitable, naturally-occurring locations to set up teleportation portals.

Because of that, the big asteroid fields tended to become places where cultivators did business. Usually, they were busy places with lots of people coming and going, bringing goods from near and far.

This particular location was a mid-sized bazaar. Although it wasn't very large, there was still quite a crowd of cultivators present. The most prominent sight was the central-most asteroid, the largest of the group, upon which sat a huge city which could be seen even from a great distance.

People flew in and out occasionally, and a buzz of activity could be heard inside. There was even a glowing shield, forming a defensive barrier that surrounded the entire place.

The Fang Clan had a teleportation portal set up on one of the asteroids, which was guarded round the clock by members of the Fang Clan. Clan members could use the portal for free, of course, whereas non-members had to pay a fee.

Virtually all of the asteroids had similar teleportation portals set up. The Four Great Clans, Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects, all had teleportation portals set up. Occasionally, the ripples of teleportation could be seen coming from those areas.

Some locations in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were controlled by various powerful organizations who restricted access; anyone who wanted to go to such places had to use one of the designated teleportation portals to do so. Such arrangements were important sources of income for many of the powerful groups in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, even the Ji Clan.

Because Planet South Heaven was such a unique and important place, virtually all of the powers had teleportation portals that went in that direction. However, considering how much Meng Hao hated to waste money, he would naturally choose to use the Fang Clan's teleportation portal.

He was just about to skirt the main bazaar and head toward the Fang Clan's asteroid when he glanced at the markets and, all of a sudden, his heart trembled. It was clearly a bustling place, filled with all sorts of shops. Some cultivators even had stalls set up to sell hand-crafted items.

In the brief time that he had been watching, numerous people had come and gone via teleportation portal, numbering into the thousands.

In addition to all that, there were also cultivators who patrolled the area and maintained order. They wore magenta robes, and all of them had significantly powerful cultivation bases, being stage 6 or 7 Immortals.

Magical combat was not permitted inside the bazaar. If conflicts broke out, the violators would be immediately expelled. In extreme cases, they might even be executed. Those were the rules in all bazaars like this one.

Of course, for such rules to be accepted by the general public, and to be able to enforce them, required significant power!

Neither the Four Great Clans, the Five Great Holy Lands, nor the Three Churches and Six Sects would interfere with the interests of the bazaars. After all, most of them were occupied by extremely powerful rogue cultivators. The weakest among them would be in the late Ancient Realm, and there were even some bazaars who were occupied by Dao Realm rogue cultivators.

This particular bazaar was formally called the Heavencloud Plaza. It was controlled by an almighty peak Ancient realm expert, who was only a half-step away from the Quasi-Dao Realm. He was known as Guru Heavencloud, and everyone knew that he could easily break through to being Quasi-Dao, or even to the Dao Realm!

However, Guru Heavencloud was very wishy-washy regarding the whole matter, and didn't dare to try to break through. He knew that if he made a mistake, he would die. The end result was that Heavencloud Plaza remained a place that no one dared to offend. Even the Four Great Clans were careful not to do anything to disturb him. After all... even if he failed in his breakthrough, he would still end up as a Quasi-Dao cultivator.

If a conflict arose, and he broke through to the Dao Realm to deal with it, it would actually be an easier situation to handle. But if he failed and became a Quasi-Dao expert, his life expectancy would be very limited. With such a short time to live, he would go mad, as if he didn't fear death at all. A situation like that would be a big headache for all the major powers.

"I haven't been home for a long time," Meng Hao thought. "After I go

back this time, who knows when the next time will be.... Dad and mom are stuck on Planet South Heaven, so I really should bring them some nice gifts....” With that, he shot toward the bazaar. As soon as he passed through the protective shield, he felt pressure weighing down on him.

At the same time, he also felt numerous streams of divine sense lock onto him. Those would be from the cultivators in the magenta robes. He could tell that if he tried to do anything untoward, they would immediately take action against him.

Of course, no matter how they analyzed Meng Hao with their divine sense, all they could sense was that he was in the Immortal Realm. They could detect an impenetrable aura on him which indicated that he was hiding something about himself, but cultivators possessed all sorts of magical techniques and items which made it impossible for others to tell everything about them with a simple scan of divine sense. Besides, it would be difficult for them to imagine that Meng Hao could possibly be a person who even their Patriarch, Guru Heavencloud, would fear.

Of course, Meng Hao was already quite famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. However, there were few people who would recognize him on sight. Most people had only seen his images on projection screens, and weren't too familiar with what he actually looked like up close.

These magenta-robed cultivators were no different. Some of them thought that he looked familiar, but none of them could place where exactly they had seen him before.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he sensed the pressure weighing down on him. If he wanted to, he could easily push back against it, and even destroy the entire shield. However, he had merely come here to buy some gifts, so there was no need to act presumptuously. Therefore, he allowed himself to be pushed down onto the ground.

As soon as he did, the gazes which had been fixed onto him vanished, to observe other incoming cultivators. They paid no more attention to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao patted his bag of holding and cleared his throat. After

winning the bet with the Demonic Cultivator Horde in the Nine Seas God World, he had quite a few pieces of Immortal jade, and had unknowingly adopted the manner of a rich person. He looked around for a moment, then began to stroll around. For the most part, he knew what kind of place this bazaar was. There were various shops and auction houses, and as for the auction houses, they didn't have membership requirements; anyone could participate in the auctions.

In addition to the shops and auction houses, there were vendor stalls, which actually made up the majority of the establishments in the bazaar. Just about everything you could imagine could be found for sale.

After sizing the place up, Meng Hao entered one of the shops. The first thing he saw was four or five other cultivators, all of whom were accompanied by salespeople who were introducing the various magical items for sale.

As soon as he stepped in, a young woman walked up. However, before she could even speak, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve the way he remembered Steward Zhou used to do. Lifting his chin up, he coolly said, "Take me to your luxury goods section."

The young woman looked at him for a moment, and almost immediately began to look down on him inwardly. She had seen a lot of people like Meng Hao in the past, people who thought they were rich, but, once they saw how expensive things were, didn't actually buy anything.

Expression the same as before, she nodded and led him to one particular corner of the shop, where she clapped her hands, causing the wall to suddenly swirl. Moments later, a collection of dozens of unique magical items appeared.

"This one," Meng Hao said, pointing at a bell. Then he pointed at another item. "And this one. That one too, and that one. These seven...."

"You have a good eye, Fellow Daoist," the young woman said coolly. "Those seven items are all high-grade magical items. The total cost for them would be about 6,000,000 spirit stones. If you want to pay with Immortal jade, I can give you a bit of a discount...." She looked at Meng

Hao, wondering whether he would dare to try to buy all seven items after hearing how expensive they were.

“Those seven... I don’t want,” he said calmly.

Inwardly, the young woman was chuckling coldly. Expression the same as usual, she was just about to continue speaking when Meng Hao said, “But I’ll take all the other ones.”

Chapter 1155: Mr. Moneybags!

“Fellow Daoist, w-what did you just say?” The young woman’s eyes went wide, and her heart began to thump with disbelief.

“I said those are the seven I DON’T want. The rest, I’ll take.” Meng Hao remained as cool as ever, but when he saw the look on the young woman’s face, a feeling rose up in his heart that he had never felt before. He thought back to one time in Yunjie County when he had happened to walk by a shop and catch sight of Steward Zhou buying things in just the same way he was doing right now.

The expression on that salesperson’s face, and his tone of voice, was exactly the same as this young woman’s right now.

She was panting, and even felt a bit dizzy. Throughout all the years she had worked at his place, she had seen many, many types of cultivators. However, this was the first time she had encountered anyone like Meng Hao.

“S-Senior... not including those seven, there are a total of 124 magical items on display.” Without even thinking about it, she began to explain further. “If you bought them with spirit stones, it would cost at least 40,000,000.... That would be about 4,000 in Immortal jade....”

Meng Hao lifted his chin and asked, “Well, are you selling, or not?” He currently had hundreds of millions of Immortal jades in his bag of holding, which meant that, if he wanted to, he could buy not only this collection of magical items, but actually, the entire shop, or even, the entire bazaar. He even had enough to buy the whole asteroid field.

After his escapades in the Nine Seas God World, Meng Hao was probably one of the richest individuals in all of the Mountain and Sea Realm. However, even that level of wealth didn’t provide him with any comfort. When he thought about how much the copper mirror liked to consume spirit stones and Immortal jades, he was left with a constant feeling of anxiety.

Even still, the look on the young woman’s face made him feel wonderful.

Finally, he could enjoy the life of a rich person. Waving his hand, he sent 4,000 Immortal jades flying out, where they piled up into a small mountain on the ground.

Immortal qi instantly swelled out, filling the entire shop, making it like a celestial paradise, complete with floating mists and clouds.

To see so much Immortal jade nearly caused the young woman's eyes to pop out of their sockets. This was the most wealth she had ever seen in one place. At the same time, the other people in the shop stared over in amazement, and even greed.

There were a few cultivators who first started trembling at the sight of the Immortal jade, then looked over at Meng Hao's bag of holding. Eyes glittering, they quickly scurried off.

Meng Hao glanced at them out of the corner of his eye, and then a slightly bashful expression appeared on his face.

"Senior, please wait a moment. Just one moment, sir. This... this exceeds my authority. Junior will go ask the shop Elder himself to come over." Panting, the saleswoman quickly edged backward. However, before she could even turn, a blast of wind flew in from the courtyard behind the shop, which quickly materialized into an old man.

He was dressed in extravagant, luxurious clothing, and had the demeanor of a transcendent being. He quickly clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

"I am Shui Motian. Greetings, Fellow Daoist. Please, consider me a good friend, and allow me to throw in those seven extra items as a gift." The Elder laughed heartily, quickly performing an incantation gesture and pointing. Instantly, the invisible restrictive spells on the wall vanished, and the magical items flew over to circle around Meng Hao, who instantly began to radiate the aura of jewels and treasures.

Meng Hao glanced at the Elder and nodded slightly, then made a grasping motion, causing the items to fly over into his bag of holding.

"Shui Motian, I'll remember that name," he said, turning to leave. The

Elder nearly went wild with joy at the last of Meng Hao's words, and he quickly followed, escorting Meng Hao all the way out of the shop, bowing and scraping the entire time.

To see him acting like this left all the salespeople in the shop in complete and utter shock. Although the transaction they had just witnessed involved a sum of money that was completely unheard-of, they still found it hard to believe that Elder Shui Motian, who was an Ancient Realm expert, would be so polite to a mere Immortal Realm cultivator.

The pretty young woman, who happened to be very close with Shui Motian, leaned over and whispered: "Elder Shui, if that guy easily forked over 4,000 pieces of Immortal jade, then his bag of holding must—" Before she could even finish her sentence, Shui Motian suddenly turned, eyes burning with rage as he slapped her across the face. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she staggered backward.

"Shut your mouth!" he said icily. "Do you know who that was? If you dare to say things like that, then considering his status, he could kill you, and me, and even the whole Heavenly Ink Sect! He could even obliterate the entire Heavencloud Bazaar in the blink of an eye!" He ended with a cold harrumph.

As soon as Meng Hao had produced the 4,000 pieces of Immortal jade, he had been certain of his identity. Although he had felt a sense of familiarity when he had scanned him with divine sense earlier, it took him a while before he had suddenly realized who he was. It was then that he decided to offer the seven magical items as gifts.

"Who... who is he?" asked the pretty young woman.

Were it any other person, Shui Motian wouldn't even answer her question. However, considering that she had attended to Meng Hao, he leaned over and whispered into her ear: "The Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, the only joint disciple of all of the Three Great Daoist Societies. He's in the Immortal Realm, but can slaughter Ancient Realm experts. That was... Meng Hao!"

"That was him!?!?" The young woman gasped, and her eyes went wide.

She turned her head to look for Meng Hao, but he had already disappeared from sight outside.

Suddenly, the young woman seemed to think of something, and she blurted, "Oh no, this is bad! Just now, there were some customers who snuck out after seeing his Immortal jade. They're probably planning some sort of treachery!"

"Don't worry about it," said Shui Motian with a cold chuckle. "They're just digging their own graves." Shui Motian knew that considering Meng Hao's identity, not even Guru Heavencloud could afford to let anything bad happen.

Meanwhile, in a relatively remote location within the bazaar, there was a building that few people liked to go near. When people did pass by it, they would glance over with anxiety and dread, then quickly bow their heads and hurry past.

Four middle-aged cultivators sat cross-legged outside the building, all of whom wore garish red robes and had cultivation bases at the peak of the Immortal Realm.

Inside the building, it was very quiet, and the only thing that could be heard was measured breathing. The cadence of the breathing made it seem as if it were in sync with Heaven and Earth, and caused the entire building to occasionally become blurry.

Currently, two cultivators were hurrying toward that very building. They stopped in front of the red-robed cultivators and kowtowed, and when they looked up, one of the two men said something to one of the red-robed men.

The red-robed cultivator immediately stood and entered the building, eyes glittering. After a moment, he emerged and said, "Go shadow him secretly, no matter where he goes. Let's see exactly how much more Immortal jade he has. If it's under 10,000, then it's not worth it for his Majesty to get involved."

The two cultivators who had just arrived looked very excited. They quickly bowed, then hurried away.

The red-robed men continued to sit there in meditation, and everything was quiet once again. On the second floor of the building, an old man sat there cross-legged. He had some brown blotches on his face, but when he opened his eyes, they glittered brightly, and the fluctuations of the late Ancient Realm rolled off of him.

“Elder Brother runs things too carefully,” he said coolly. “The whole purpose of the Heavencloud Bazaar is to make it convenient for us to practice cultivation. Since Elder Brother is in secluded meditation, I’m in charge. 4,000 Immortal jades, huh.... I don’t care who he is, with that much Immortal jade, he... will have to fork some over if he wants to leave alive!” With that, he closed his eyes again.

Meng Hao continued to stroll through the bazaar, acting very rich and imposing. He walked into every shop he saw and bought anything that looked good. Magical items, medicinal pills, medicinal plants, magical technique manuals, and all sorts of other items. He even bought things that weren’t for sale. One such item was a huge, paneled room screen decorated with a White Tiger, which he liked mostly because it looked amazing and exuded spiritual energy. He waved his hand, sending out so much money that the shopkeeper could only stare in shock.

Meng Hao pointed at a throne made of numerous flying swords and said, “This thing looks nice! I bet dad will like it. I’ll take it!”

He saw a statue made entirely from spirit stones, which in itself was actually a magical item. “This is wonderful too. I’ll take it!”

“This too!

“This armor looks pretty good. I want a thousand sets!

“These Daoist robes are nice. I’ll take them!

“How much for all of the jade scrolls in your whole shop? I want them all.” When Meng Hao thought about how his father couldn’t leave Planet South Heaven, he decided that buying him a whole scroll-shop worth of reading material would make it very easy for him to keep up on his reading.

Meng Hao wasn't too confident when it came to things that female cultivators liked. Since he wasn't sure what things his mother preferred, he also decided to buy an entire shop!

"This is a pretty good set of puppets. I'll take them!"

Wherever he went, the shops nearly went mad with joy. Soon, everyone in the entire bazaar knew about the young, rich cultivator who was making the rounds.

Some people even began to follow him and keep track of how much he had spent. Eventually, he had spent the equivalent of about 1,000,000,000 spirit stones, which was about 100,000 Immortal jades.

The cultivators who had been sent to shadow him had eyes bloodshot with madness. They began to report back to their superiors, and soon, the sensation that a storm was brewing spread out through the whole bazaar.

Meng Hao apparently didn't notice, and continued to rampantly sweep through the shops and buy everything he fancied. He even started looking through the various vendor stalls, and whenever he saw something he liked, he took it, which sometimes even included entire stalls.

He was exactly like a Mr. Moneybags. Normally, spending money gave him a big headache, but considering he was buying gifts for his parents, he didn't mind at all.

He also bought some gifts for his sister. Soon, he had bought up nearly a third of all the items available at the bazaar, and had spent nearly 300,000 pieces of Immortal jade.

As for the two cultivators who had originally been sent to shadow him, they returned to the distant building and reported in. The old man who sat there cross-legged opened his eyes, and they shone with killing intent.

"300,000 Immortal jades.... For him to be willing to spend so much indicates that he must have more than 1,000,000 total in his bag of holding. Heavens! 1,000,000 Immortal jades...." The old man started panting, and a look of mad greed appeared in his eyes. However, he immediately began to doubt himself. Considering this mark had so much

money, he was clearly someone with an extraordinary background, a person not to be trifled with casually.

Chapter 1156: Blood-stained Jade Medallion!

The old man was somewhat conflicted. On the one hand, he felt deeply greedy, but on the other hand, Meng Hao's background caused him to waver and suppress that greed to a certain degree. After vacillating for a moment, his eyes suddenly glittered, and he looked outside the building.

Currently, a red-robed cultivator was out there, bowing deeply with clasped hands.

"Patriarch, the mark is currently on his way to an auction. It seems he plans to participate."

The old man's eyes flickered with determination, and he shot to his feet. He then strode out of the building and headed in the direction of the auction, flanked by four red-robed cultivators. All of them had fierce expressions and radiated killing intent.

"It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, if you have less than 1,000,000 Immortal jades, I'll leave you alone. Until I know more about your background, I won't touch you...." Having made his decision to go observe Meng Hao a bit further, the old man's eyes flashed.

Just as the red-robed cultivators had said, Meng Hao had finished his shopping spree in the shops and vendor stalls, and was now in the main auction house in the middle of the bazaar. He stood off to the side, looking at the main stage, and the items being auctioned off. Not many people were calling out bids. There were quite a few magenta-robed figures in the area, keeping track of the bids, and generally looking very threatening.

No one was allowed to make fraudulent bids, and anyone who did make a bid was required to be able to purchase the lot at the said price. Anyone who tried to cause problems would run the risk of being chased down and killed by the forces of the Heavencloud Bazaar.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he stood there watching. People in the area almost immediately noticed him, and were visibly

excited. Word began to spread, and soon everyone in the auction house had become aware of his presence.

After all, having been in the bazaar for a short half-day, he had already bought nearly thirty percent of all the available goods there. He was obviously incredibly rich. It would have been impossible for him not to attract attention, and that was especially the case with the female cultivators. Whenever they looked at him, their eyes gleamed, and they tried to look as pretty as possible. Obviously, they were hoping to catch his eye and have the chance to strike it rich themselves.

There were a few people who seemed to find him familiar. After a moment, their eyes would widen as they realized who he really was.

That was even true of the auctioneer, who couldn't help but glance at him occasionally and pay special attention to him.

Meng Hao seemed indifferent to the commotion as he stood there calmly; however, inwardly, he was actually feeling quite puzzled.

"Why haven't they come yet? Something's off. They followed me for a long time, and keep coming and going. After reporting back in, they should have told someone all the details.

"Maybe these people aren't that adept at robbery?" He frowned. He didn't have the time to sit around waiting. After a bit of thought, he came to the conclusion that perhaps because he hadn't left the bazaar itself, the people who were after him felt it wasn't convenient to make a move....

"In that case," he thought, "I might as well just leave. That will at least give them a chance." Having made up his mind, he was just about to leave, when suddenly, the auctioneer produced a jade tray which he held aloft.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Fellow Daoists, the next lot has a mysterious background," he said, his voice proud. "For the sake of ensuring that our bazaar remains a flourishing place, and for the purposes of gaining fame for our auction house, Patriarch Heavencloud has decided to offer up one of his rarest heirlooms!

"This is none other than a jade pendant, a medallion that is not from the

Ninth Mountain and Sea. No, this medallion comes from the Eighth Mountain and Sea. On one side is carved a lightning bolt, and on the other side, the character Meng 孟. According to our Patriarch's speculations, this is none other than... a command medallion belonging to a member of the Meng Clan from the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Although it's impossible to tell who exactly it belonged to, clearly, they had a high status!

"How do we know? Because this medallion, despite being an Ancient Realm treasure, is stained with blood, sealing it completely, and ensuring that it can only unleash Immortal Realm power....

"Although our Patriarch is unable to remove the seal, there are many almighty entities in Heaven and Earth. Surely someone exists out there who CAN unseal it!" He held the jade pendant out in his right hand, and it glittered with green light. Furthermore, the sound of thunder rattled out from it in all directions. It was even possible to just barely make out a green lightning bolt building up within the light that emanated out from the pendant.

Although it seemed incredible, the sensation it gave off was only that of the Immortal Realm. Even still, the pendant would clearly count as a valuable treasure to any Immortal Realm cultivator.

There was also a deep gash on the surface of the pendant, which had turned a dark purple color, as if it were filled with congealed blood. Its overall appearance was very bizarre.

"The starting bid for this item is 8,000,000 spirit stones!" the auctioneer cried out in a loud voice.

Meng Hao had originally intended to leave. But then he stopped and looked at the jade medallion, and immense waves of shock smashed through his mind.

As he looked at the jade pendant, he began to pant. How could he ever have imagined that he would run into this object at a bazaar like this?!?!

It was most certainly a command medallion of the Meng Clan from the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Furthermore, it was not the command medallion of an ordinary clan member. Meng Hao all of a sudden recalled

the visage of an old man, an old man who had come to stand by the side of his heartbroken Grandpa Fang when he had experienced his first Seventh Year Tribulation.

That old man was no stranger. It was his Grandpa Meng!

He was the Grand Elder of the Meng Clan from the Eighth Mountain and Sea!

Meng Hao remembered playing with his command medallion as a child, a medallion had looked exactly like the one on the auction stage right now!

Meng Hao was panting, and his mind was spinning. He would never be able to forget how his two grandfathers had left looking for an Outsider, all to save him. That Outsider eventually came, and had explained to Meng Hao's parents what they needed to do. However, his Grandpa Fang and Grandpa Meng... never returned.

Meng Hao would never be able to forget those matters, and he had always hoped that one day, he would be able to find them, or at least some clues regarding what had happened.

Now, looking at the jade medallion, he was filled with the intense sensation that it... was none other than his Grandpa Meng's command medallion.

That thought caused his heart to tremble. He wasn't sure whose blood it was that had stained the pendant, but it filled him with intense concern for his grandfather.

"50,000,000 spirit stones!" he cried out, his voice decisive enough to sever nails and chop iron. "Give me that pendant!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, deathly silence filled the air. Others who had been about to call out prices first gasped, then closed their mouths and refrained from speaking out any bids. One by one, everyone turned to look at Meng Hao.

Even the auctioneer stared in shock. In his estimation, the jade pendant was worth no more than about 30,000,000 spirit stones. However, Meng

Hao had unexpectedly cried out a bid of 50,000,000.

“Um... are there any other Fellow Daoists who would like to make a bid?” he asked without even thinking about it. Nobody responded. All of the surrounding cultivators were simply awestruck by the price which Meng Hao had just bid.

The auctioneer swallowed hard and said, “Very well, since that’s the case, this lot goes to–”

He had been just about to strike down the auctioneer’s hammer, when all of a sudden...

“I bid 100,000,000 spirit stones.” An ancient voice rang out as if from the Heavens above. Everyone turned their heads to see an old man stride into the auction house, flanked by four red-robed cultivators.

He had brown blotches on his face, and he seemed threatening without looking angry. His cultivation base was in the late Ancient Realm, and he almost seemed to be at one with his surroundings. His sudden appearance on the scene caused shock among the surrounding cultivators.

“It’s Guru Heavenwind!!”

“That’s Guru Heavencloud’s Junior Brother, one of the Patriarchs of the Heavencloud Bazaar!!”

“What’s he doing here? And why did he just make a bid? 100,000,000.... Could it be that this jade medallion has some shocking power or ability?!” The crowd immediately went into an uproar. The auctioneer stared in shock and immediately shut his mouth. Instead of striking down with the hammer, he clasped hands and bowed respectfully to Guru Heavenwind.

It wasn’t just him. All of the magenta-robed cultivators, as well as all of the other auction attendees, clasped hands and bowed in greeting.

Guru Heavenwind smiled and nodded. Then he turned to Meng Hao, his expression one of kindness and even regret. When he looked at him, he realized that he seemed familiar, and his heart began to pound. Then, his eyes went wide as he suddenly realized who Meng Hao was.

But then he pretended to be unaware of his identity. “Young friend,” he said, “I offer my sincere apologies. My Elder Brother sent his item here to be auctioned completely on accident. It should never have been put up for sale. However, the reputation of the Heavencloud Bazaar is of the utmost importance. Rather than cancel the auction, I will purchase it. I hope you can understand the situation, young friend.”

Upon hearing his words, everyone in attendance laughed inwardly. Although the explanation seemed reasonable on the surface, considering that he owned the auction house, it meant that he could bid whatever price he wanted.

Meng Hao’s gaze turned icy. After looking at the old man for a moment, he completely ignored him and said, “100,000 Immortal jades.”

His words immediately caused everyone to gasp. 100,000 Immortal jades was equivalent to 1,000,000,000 spirit stones. Such a sum caused every to begin to pant. Although they all knew Meng Hao was rich, to hear him mention a number like that left them flabbergasted.

Guru Heavenwind trembled inwardly, but he put on a calm front and said, “We can’t sell it to you, young friend. I’ll offer one more Immortal jade than you.”

“500,000 Immortal jades,” Meng Hao said, his voice calm.

“Young friend, please, don’t make trouble for–”

“1,000,000 Immortal jades,” Meng Hao said coldly, flicking his sleeve and rotating his cultivation base. “Give me that medallion!” His cold voice was like an icy wind that swirled from all directions, causing everyone to instantly feel colder. However, even if they were colder, they would still be thoroughly shocked by the price Meng Hao had just named.

“1,000,000 Immortal jades.... that’s equivalent to 10,000,000,000 spirit stones.... Heavens! J-just what kind of jade medallion is that!?!?”

“Crazy! They’re all crazy....”

As the crowd burst into an uproar, Guru Heavenwind felt his heart pounding, and he began to pant. The longer he looked at Meng Hao, the

less he was able to control his emotions. Finally, his eyes went bloodshot.

“The Heavencloud Bazaar doesn’t allow fraudulent bidding!” he said, his voice hoarse. In response, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding, causing one Immortal jade after another to fly out. In the blink of an eye, a mountain of 1,000,000 Immortal jades had piled up next to him.

The towering mountain caused everyone to stare in complete shock. Their minds were blank, filled with nothing but a roaring sound.

As soon as the Immortal jades appeared, Meng Hao flickered toward the main stage, and reached out to grab the jade medallion from the auctioneer.

It was at this point, however, that Guru Heavenwind, eyes bloodshot, suddenly flew into the air to stand in his way. He glared at Meng Hao and, voice hoarse, said, “10,000,000 Immortal jades and you can have it!”

Chapter 1157: I Won't Buy It!

To most of the people present, a jade medallion like the one in question might be worth 20-30,000,000 spirit stones at most. Since one Immortal jade was worth 10,000 spirits stones, that put its value at a few thousand Immortal jades at most, and definitely less than 10,000.

However, Guru Heavenwind had just mentioned 10,000,000 Immortal jades, a sum equal to 100,000,000,000 spirit stones....

It was difficult to imagine or even describe that much wealth. It would be an extraordinary sum to even an entire sect or clan. As for the Heavencloud Bazaar... it would take hundreds or perhaps thousands of years to accumulate 10,000,000 Immortal jades.

For him to demand such a price... was equivalent of bald-faced robbery.

Everyone in the audience gasped in response to what was happening. They were both shaken by Guru Heavenwind's words, and also astonished at Meng Hao's display of wealth.

"10,000,000 Immortal jades and you can have the medallion!" Guru Heavenwind said. "Otherwise, it belongs to the Heavencloud Bazaar, and it's none of your business what we do with it, even if we crush it to bits!" Guru Heavenwind's eyes were completely bloodshot. He knew who Meng Hao actually was, and if the sum involved was less than 1,000,000 Immortal jades, then after mulling it over, he would likely have held back from doing anything to offend him. However, the amount of wealth involved pushed him to the point where he didn't care about who Meng Hao was.

Wealth can drive people crazy, can make them lose their minds, especially when combined with strong desire. To Guru Heavenwind, 10,000,000 Immortal jades was worth risking his life for. Considering he had reached this decision, it was obvious that he had passed the point of considering whether or not it was worth it to offend Meng Hao, and had chosen to actually threaten him!

In fact, he no longer even cared about the Heavencloud Bazaar as a

whole. From his perspective, if he could get his hands on that much money, he could flee to the furthest corners of the universe. Furthermore, he was sure that even if his Elder Brother came out of secluded meditation, he would be so moved by the amount of money involved that he would not interfere. After all, Guru Heavenwind knew Guru Heavencloud better than anyone else.

“Today, he’ll buy this thing... whether he wants to or not!” he thought. His four red-robed followers were all panting the same as him as they joined in to intercept Meng Hao.

Meng Hao hovered in midair, staring at Guru Heavenwind, his face turning cold.

“You shameless old fart!” he said with a cold snort. “I offered 1,000,000 Immortal jades, yet you won’t accept? Fine... I won’t buy it!” He looked over at the auctioneer, who was rushing to leave. Being in no mood to pay any heed to Guru Heavenwind, his body suddenly flickered. He moved with such speed that Guru Heavenwind and his four red-robed followers saw nothing but a blur. Then, a moment later, Meng Hao was behind them, speeding forward to appear on the main stage, right in front of the auctioneer.

“Give that to me!” he said, stretching his hand out. Trembling, the auctioneer unhesitatingly threw the jade medallion toward Meng Hao and then fled, unwilling to be involved in the chaos.

Guru Heavenwind’s face fell. “Meng Hao, what are you doing!?” he roared, speeding directly toward Meng Hao, eyes flashing with killing intent, energy surging.

“What am I doing? Are you blind?” Meng Hao replied coldly. “Can’t you see that I’m robbing you!?” He made a grasping motion with this left hand, and the jade medallion flew toward him. As soon as it landed in his palm, he put it into his bag of holding.

The eyes of every member of the audience went wide, especially in response to Meng Hao’s thunderous words that echoed out in all directions.

This was their first time ever hearing someone talk about robbing others with such confidence, as if it were the most righteous and proper thing to do.

Guru Heavenwind's rage towered into the sky. As he and his four red-robed followers closed in on Meng Hao, they extended their hands to unleash divine abilities and magical techniques that combined to form a pagoda of magical treasures, which then smashed down toward Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao, how dare you throw a temper tantrum here!" Guru Heavenwind raged.

Meng Hao stood in place, neither dodging nor evading. His eyes flickered with coldness, and he waved his right hand, causing his cultivation base to erupt with power. A massive blast of force exploded out in front of him.

Rumbling echoed out, and Guru Heavenwind's face fell. The pagoda trembled for a moment, and cracks spread out across its surface. Then it simply exploded, as if some giant, invisible hand had crushed it to pieces.

The crushed pagoda transformed into countless chunks of ash which then shot backward in a backlash attack, rushing toward Guru Heavenwind, whose face fell as he realized he was facing a power that he couldn't fight back against. A sensation of deadly crisis instantly filled his mind.

"Impossible!!" Guru Heavenwind was completely astonished. He was in the late Ancient Realm, and in the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole, could be considered a powerful and important figure. And yet, when facing Meng Hao, he was filled with terror.

Earlier, he hadn't been able to see through everything about Meng Hao, although he did know that he was a mere Immortal Realm cultivator with the backing of a large clan. But now Meng Hao seemed incredibly powerful and even... almighty!

He was so strong that Guru Heavenwind could barely evade his attack. Furthermore, even his cultivation base had been thrown into chaos. Meng Hao made his eyes go wide and his entire body tremble. His heart was

pounding so hard it seemed like it might simply stop beating.

He had never felt such intense pressure, not even from his Elder Brother Guru Heavencloud. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he fell back at top speed.

He just barely managed to evade the main force of the blow. Unfortunately for the red-robed cultivators, they were not qualified to do so. A boom rang out, and blood sprayed out of their mouths. It was as if a wind of destruction swept across them, shredding their flesh and blood, turning the wind into a haze of red that left behind only their skeletons.

The skeletons remained for only a single extra breath of time before they became ash. Even their souls were completely wiped away.

Everything happened too quickly. With the simple wave of a hand, Meng Hao killed four Immortal Realm cultivators and seriously injured Guru Heavenwind. The surrounding cultivators gasped in shock, then looked over at Meng Hao with expressions of disbelief.

“This... this....”

“What cultivation base does he have? He actually forced Guru Heavenwind into retreat!!”

“But from the look of it, he’s clearly in the Immortal Realm....”

“Guru Heavenwind just called him Meng Hao... Meng Hao.... I remember! He’s Meng Hao, Crown Prince of the Fang Clan!! He’s the sole joint disciple of all of the Three Great Daoist Societies! B-but... how could he be so strong!?!?”

Everyone was in an uproar.

Guru Heavenwind’s heart trembled as he came to the realization that he was simply incapable of fighting Meng Hao alone. Although his cultivation base appeared to be in the Immortal Realm, after he attacked, Guru Heavenwind could see that he was far, far stronger than he appeared.

Even as he fell back, blood oozing from the corners of his mouth, he

suddenly roared: “All disciples of the Heavencloud Bazaar, hear my command. Kill this man at all costs!!”

The surrounding magenta-robed cultivators hesitated. Then, a few mustered their courage, roared, and charged Meng Hao.

Guru Heavenwind took advantage of this opportunity to attempt to escape.

With a cold harrumph, Meng Hao began to advance. When the magenta-robed cultivators tried to block his way, he said, “Screw off!”

His voice echoed like thunderclaps, slamming into the cultivators’ ears, causing their minds to reel and their cultivation bases to become unstable. Vision swimming, their minds went blank momentarily.

As for Guru Heavenwind, the words caused blood to spray out of his mouth, and he pushed himself faster as he fled.

“Damnation! How could he be so strong!?!?” His face was deathly white, and his heart overflowed with regret. Sweat poured down his face as he realized that, considering how viciously he had offended Meng Hao, there was no way that he would let him go.

Meng Hao sped through the air in an azure beam of light that transformed into an azure roc. An explosive wind kicked up as the distance between him and Guru Heavenwind was reduced from a few hundred meters to less than thirty.

“Elder Brother, save me!!” Guru Heavenwind cried shrilly. By now, his heart was filled with terror.

The entire Heavencloud Bazaar had been thrown into chaos. When the cultivators heard Meng Hao exploding into action, and then Guru Heavenwind screaming for help, they were shocked to the core.

Everyone in the shops and stalls where Meng Hao had shopped could see what was happening. They were shocked to hear who he was, but were even more shocked to discover that, not only did he have an incredible background, he was also terrifying in terms of cultivation base.

Of course, what they knew now was only the tip of the iceberg. If they knew that the Fang Clan was now an Allheaven Clan, and that Meng Hao was the true Patriarch of that clan, then their shock would reach a level that would be impossible to describe.

By now, the cultivators manning the various teleportation portals in the asteroid field had sensed the chaos erupting in the bazaar. Many of them were now flying over to see what was happening.

At about that time, Meng Hao in azure roc form appeared in front of Guru Heavenwind and slashed out with razor-sharp claws.

However, even as he did, a cold and sinister voice echoed out through the bazaar, filled with power, dissatisfaction, and rage.

“Harm him not, lad. I can provide an explanation for everything!” Along with the voice came a beam of sword light, bursting with killing intent. It transformed into a waterfall-like stream that surged toward Meng Hao.

It was almost as though... if Meng Hao dared to continue his attack, the waterfall would slash him to pieces!

The words implied a discussion was to be had, but from the type of attack being leveled against Meng Hao, it was clear exactly how domineering the true lord of the Heavencloud Bazaar was. This was Guru Heavencloud, who was domineering to the extreme!

However, when people tried to be domineering in front of Meng Hao... then, he would be even MORE domineering!

Chapter 1158: Guru Heavencloud!

When Guru Heavenwind heard the voice of his Elder Brother, Guru Heavencloud, he was instantly enlivened. Believing himself to finally have hope, his eyes flickered with killing intent, and he thought of using the opportunity to try to cut Meng Hao down in a counterattack.

However, even as the idea flitted through his mind... Meng Hao snorted coldly. The sound slammed into Heavenwind's ears like an explosive bolt of lightning. His body shook violently, and his mind was thrown into chaos.

At the same time, Meng Hao in azure roc form didn't slow down, but instead, bore down on Guru Heavenwind, slashing downward into the top of his head. A crunching sound was heard as his entire head was shredded to pieces.

There was no time for him to scream, nor his soul to flee. The azure roc's talons slashed again with obliterating power down into the rest of Guru Heavenwind's body.

A boom rang out as Guru Heavenwind exploded into pieces. Even his soul was destroyed!

Meng Hao normally didn't attack with such deadly force. However, Guru Heavenwind had been too greedy. Meng Hao had offered 1,000,000 Immortal jades in good faith. However, instead of quitting while he was ahead, Guru Heavenwind had used the sum of 10,000,000 Immortal jades as an obvious extortion, and had even threatened to destroy the jade medallion....

Were it any other object, that wouldn't have mattered. But this jade medallion was an important clue regarding his two grandfathers. How could he possibly restrain his killing intent? And then there was the way Guru Heavencloud had spoken to him. Had he been even a bit more polite, Meng Hao might not necessarily have resorted to deadly force.

However, Guru Heavencloud's words, despite seeming polite, were actually extremely domineering. Clearly, the man was used to running his

own personal little fiefdom here at the bazaar. Unfortunately for him, Meng Hao wasn't used to restraining his temper around people like that.

Neat and tidy. That was how he killed. A moment later, an enraged roar echoed out, causing everything to shake. A figure appeared, flying through the air; simultaneously, the waterfall of swords fell onto Meng Hao.

A boom rang out as Meng Hao hovered in midair, completely unmoving. In fact, it was the waterfall of swords that shattered into fragments with a boom, completely incapable of harming him at all!

As the shocking roar echoed about, an old man appeared. He wore a violet robe, and looked extremely dignified. As he flew forth, boundless ripples rolled out. As soon as the magenta-robed cultivators caught sight of him, they dropped to their knees and kowtowed.

“Greetings, Patriarch!”

This was none other than the Patriarch of the Heavencloud Bazaar, Guru Heavencloud. He looked awe-inspiring, and also enraged. However, inwardly, he was shocked. The sword waterfall from moments ago had been unleashed in anger upon Meng Hao, and yet hadn't even fazed him. However, Guru Heavencloud kept his astonishment hidden, allowing no hint of it to show on his face.

Cries of shock rang up from cultivators in the bazaar. They were amazed by the energy and pressure radiating from the violet-robed old man. These were the ripples of power of someone who could step into the Dao Realm at any time. Even if he failed, he would still be a shocking Quasi-Dao expert.

The air around him twisted and distorted, and the faint manifestation of numerous natural laws and Essences could be seen. He was boundlessly domineering, causing colors to flash up above, and the starry sky to tremble.

“You have robbed my Heavencloud Bazaar, lad, and also killed my Junior Brother. I don't care if you're the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan! It wouldn't matter if your father Fang Xiufeng personally showed up, or even the Fang Clan's Dao Realm Patriarch, Fang Shoudao, you had better

provide me with an explanation, right now!” His voice brimmed with Heavenly might, booming out in all directions, shaking all of the asteroids in the asteroid field.

“I killed your Junior Brother because he tried to kill me!” Meng Hao retorted coolly. “Furthermore, he greedily tried to use something that didn’t belong to him to threaten me! That’s exactly the type of people I like to kill!

“As for robbing your Heavencloud Bazaar, I put 1,000,000 Immortal jades onto the table, and in return, you people tried to extort me! In that case... yeah, I robbed you! So what!?”

“No matter how you justify it, no matter what reasons you cite, you killed one of my people and stole my property. You have committed a grave crime. The Heavencloud Bazaar doesn’t fall under the jurisdiction of any of the sects or power groups. We are eternally neutral! However, if people try to bully us, then I, Heavencloud, can’t possibly stand idly by!” Guru Heavencloud’s voice boomed out, and his energy rocketed up. A windstorm sprang up to spin around him in all directions.

His voice fairly burst with a domineering air, as if his words were natural laws of Heaven and Earth. Here in the Heavencloud Bazaar, his words bore the power of the Heavens, and he wrote the rules!

If he said you were in the wrong, you were in the wrong! If he said that you had committed a crime, then you were guilty, whether you had actually committed the crime or not!

His echoing voice filled the surrounding cultivators with shock. They could sense his domineering air, and as for the magenta-robed disciples, they were starting to get excited.

Their eyes filled with ardor; this was their Patriarch, who brimmed with a domineering aura no matter who he was up against.

“Immediately produce the item you stole from my Heavencloud Bazaar, surrender, and admit your fault. Then send for the leadership of your clan to come and personally take you away. That is your only option here!” Guru Heavencloud spoke as coldly and as domineeringly as ever, and his

strength could definitely back up this attitude. Normally speaking, he was very cautious in everything, but when he encountered situations like this, he always acted this way.

It didn't matter who was actually in the right or wrong. As long as he was in his own domain, he was ALWAYS right!

One of the reasons why the Heavencloud Bazaar had been able to survive for so long, and even thrive, was because of this combination of a cautious and yet domineering attitude. After all... few powerful groups would be willing to force Guru Heavencloud into a corner merely because of some unimportant matters. He could step into the Dao Realm at any time, which was a huge trump card.

Furthermore, being able to step into the Dao Realm so easily meant that any powerful group would jump at the chance to recruit him, which was another trump card.

Although he could see that Meng Hao was powerful, he also believed that such power had limits. Therefore, he still looked down on him. His Junior Brother had been in the late Ancient Realm, but his cultivation base had been jumbled. If Guru Heavencloud had wished it, he could have killed him easily at any time.

It might be true that his sword waterfall hadn't hurt Meng Hao, but considering his years of experience, he was still confident in being able to handle him. After all, he was merely the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, which wasn't actually a very powerful position.

Although the title sounded prestigious, all it did was make Meng Hao a figurehead. Guru Heavenwind couldn't bring himself to believe that after the war on Planet East Victory, the Fang Clan, having suffered so many casualties, would allow a blood feud to erupt just because of a measly Crown Prince.

He simply didn't believe Meng Hao to be so important. Even if he was the joint disciple of the Three Great Daoist Societies, he couldn't possibly be important enough that the Fang Clan would actually go to the lengths of offending Guru Heavenwind in a way that could result in casualties.

The Fang Clan might be a big clan, but considering Guru Heavencloud's position, he naturally knew that any sect or clan took the interests of the group into consideration, and didn't make decisions based on one individual.

When it came to insults or backing down, the interests of the clan would be put before the interests of one person.

His analysis was actually correct, and had these events played out before Meng Hao went to the Windswept Realm, then the Fang Clan might have shown up and made a scene, but would have resolved the situation quietly in the end. That would have saved face for both parties. In the end, the jade medallion would have gone to the Fang Clan, and the Heavencloud Bazaar would have ended up with all the Immortal jade.

Guru Heavencloud had gone through similar situations before, and the end result was always the same.

Unfortunately for him, there was one thing he didn't understand. And that was... what it meant to be the true Clan Chief of an Allheaven Clan!

Seeing Guru Heavenwind acting in such a domineering way caused Meng Hao to chuckle. Then his eyes flickered with coldness, and he glanced over to the Fang Clan teleportation portal. It was being manned by six members of the Fang Clan, all of whom looked familiar, although he couldn't recall their names.

He could sense the faint presence of a Dao seed in all of them, although in most of them it was very faint. Only one of their number seemed to have a somewhat flourishing Dao seed; the others did not.

The entire group was in a state of shock. They had recognized their Crown Prince at first glance, and the current friction between him and Guru Heavencloud left them shaken.

"The six of you heard what Guru Heavencloud said just now, right?" Meng Hao asked coolly. "Immediately take this information and report back to the clan. Ask Patriarch Shoudao whether or not he's interested in taking the Heavencloud Bazaar and changing its name to the Fang Clan Bazaar." Meng Hao's words were actually even more domineering than

Guru Heavencloud's. Originally, he had planned to visit Planet South Heaven first, and then go back to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory.

However, considering how events had developed, he had come up with a new plan. Since he was already planning to go pay respects to his parents, he figured he might as well bring the Fang Clan with him!

His parents couldn't leave Planet South Heaven, but he could still honor them by having the clan itself go to them offer greetings!

As their son, this was... a truly great gift that he could offer!

By means of their son, they would receive honor and glory from the entire clan!

The six members of the Fang Clan exchanged glances, then clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao. Three of them backed up and departed for the Fang Clan via the teleportation portal.

Guru Heavencloud did nothing to stop them. He hovered in midair, smiling coldly, waiting for the influential members of the Fang Clan to arrive. In his mind, once the entire Fang Clan got dragged into the matter, the situation would have devolved to the point that Meng Hao couldn't resolve it alone.

Meng Hao looked at Guru Heavencloud, and his eyes suddenly gleamed with the desire to fight. Voice cool, he said: "Well, while we wait for them to arrive, I'd like to see how the great circle of the Ancient Realm... measures up to me in terms of strength!"

Voice cold, Guru Heavencloud said, "How barbaric of you, lad. You—"

However, before he could finish, his face fell as Meng Hao took a step forward.

Everything began to shake, and cracking sounds echoed out in all directions. The tempest swirling around Guru Heavencloud immediately shattered. The interference to the natural laws and Essences caused the air around him to distort.

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao appeared directly in front of Guru

Heavencloud, azure light shining. He waved a hand, causing numerous Immortal mountains to descend.

Guru Heavencloud's mind trembled as he sensed the incredibly threatening pressure radiating off of Meng Hao. Without hesitation, he lifted his right hand and waved it out in front of him. Instantly, all of his Soul Lamps appeared around him, moving in a pattern that resembled a spell formation. They instantly began to rotate, and the pattern erupted with the power of natural law, transforming into countless threads that shot toward Meng Hao.

“Alter Heavens, Transform Earth. Wind-Cloud Tribulation!” he roared. As the sound boomed through the air, Meng Hao's Immortal mountains crumbled into pieces. However, by this time, Meng Hao had taken a second step, whereupon he waved his right index finger!

The air in front of him was ripped open by a huge rift, from within which stretched out a blood-colored head. This was none other than the Blood Demon Grand Magic. However, this time, it was not just a head which appeared, but an entire Blood Demon!

It tore open the rift, causing blood-red light to spill out. Then the Blood Demon charged forward, its hands snatching out toward Guru Heavencloud.

Guru Heavencloud's expression instantly flickered with shock.

Chapter 1159: Forced Backward, Over and Over!

Before fusing with his third Nirvana Fruit, he could only materialize a head when using the Blood Demon Grand Magic. After everything he had experienced in the Windswept Realm though, his Blood Demon Grand Magic had advanced to an astonishing degree, thanks in large part to the third Nirvana Fruit. As the void ripped open, a full Blood Demon emerged, roaring.

The hand which stretched out toward Guru Heavencloud sported razor-sharp claws, and radiated boundless blood-colored light. Guru Heavencloud's blood suddenly seemed to be incited to the boiling point, causing his face to flicker as he waved his finger toward the Blood Demon.

As his finger waved through the air, his forehead split apart, causing a drop of black blood to fly out. It wriggled and twisted as it sped through the air, emitting a shriek like that of a baby as it rapidly grew larger, transforming into a mosquito!

The mosquito was only the size of a hand, but it radiated a boundless murderous aura as it buzzed through the air toward the Blood Demon.

One was gigantic, the other was minuscule. However, when they slammed into each other, a huge boom rang out; apparently neither of the two could overcome the other.

The blood-colored light around the Blood Demon transformed into a sea of blood, but the mosquito was incredibly agile. It dodged to the side, and then stuck its mouthpiece in and started sucking up the blood.

"Interesting," Meng Hao said with a chuckle. He had never seen a beast like this particular mosquito before. He quickly raised his right hand and performed an incantation gesture, then pointed in Guru Heavencloud's direction.

Numerous Immortal mountains descended, spinning around the area and crushing down toward Guru Heavencloud. Their mere appearance on

the scene caused the entire asteroid to begin to tremble.

If you looked closely, you would be able to see that on the peaks of the Immortal mountains were cross-legged figures, meditating. Those figures looked almost exactly like Meng Hao!

This was a divine ability manifested because of Meng Hao fusing with the third Nirvana Fruit and reaching the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm.

Guru Heavencloud's heart began to pound. The increasing threat posed by Meng Hao caused him to suddenly realize that he had acted a bit presumptuously before. However, he was still fully confident in himself.

With a cold harrumph, he waved his sleeve, causing a beam of sword light to fly out, within which was a black flying sword that fairly dripped with deadly poison. As it whistled through the air, the black sword split apart into numerous ghost images. Hundreds of beams of sword light shot toward the Immortal mountains, each one of them filled with the astonishing power of Guru Heavencloud's full circle Ancient Realm cultivation base.

Booms rang out as the sword light closed in on the Immortal mountains. Distortions spread out, and as the Immortal mountains began to collapse, the images of Meng Hao opened their eyes and looked around with cold gazes. They were like clones of Meng Hao, all of whom rose to their feet and flew directly toward the sword light.

A huge boom rang out through the air.

"I'm very curious to see how many magical items you have tucked away!" Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing beams of violet light to shoot out into the air and rapidly form into the outline of a moon!

It was... a violet-colored moon!

The moon transformed into an illusory shadow which shot toward Guru Heavencloud, rapidly shrinking down until it landed on his forehead and sank down inside. Moments later, the mark of a violet moon began to form in that very spot!

It was in that moment that the magic of the violet moon exploded out!

An intense sensation of crisis swept through Guru Heavencloud, causing him to gasp. However, he had no time to consider the situation. Something inside him was telling him that he could under no circumstances allow the violet moon to fully form on his forehead. He immediately fell back, waving his sleeve, causing a white banner to unfurl around him. The banner transformed into numerous Cloud Dragons, which roared viciously as they shot, not toward Meng Hao, but toward Guru Heavencloud's own forehead.

In the moment before the moon fully formed, nine Cloud Dragons transformed into a protective force that exploded toward the violet moon.

Massive rumbling sounds could be heard as the nine protective dragons caused the violet moon magic to gradually dissipate.

A strange gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. This was the first time he had encountered someone who primarily used magical items in battle, with few divine abilities. He took a step forward, making a snatching motion, which caused the previously pitch-black void in the area to suddenly erupt with white beams of light.

Numerous intense beams flew out of the ground of the asteroid, and shockingly, even the distant sun!

They rapidly coalesced into a hand-sized image of a sun!

This was Meng Hao's own divine ability... the Supernova Magic! 1

He tossed the sun out, sending the blinding globe of light shooting toward Guru Heavencloud. As it neared, it continued to suck in more light, growing larger and larger, until it began to send out shocking ripples that caused Guru Heavencloud's face to fall.

Meng Hao was actually very curious about this battle style which used so many magical items; it was as equally shocking as his own numerous divine abilities.

"How could he have so many divine abilities and Daoist magics!?" he thought, his face falling. "Plus, each and every Daoist magic seems

completely extraordinary!” As of this moment, he no longer dared to underestimate Meng Hao. As the globe of light bore down on him, intense feelings of crisis filled him once again. He suddenly lifted his right foot up into the air and took a step forward. Rumbling filled the air as an enormous Feng Shui compass appeared, spinning through the air and shining with boundless light. Shockingly, numerous ghostly images appeared inside the light, howling viciously as they shot toward the light of the Supernova Magic.

“Lad, I have more magical items than you can even imagine!” Guru Heavencloud said, his voice dark and sinister. What he said was true. After all, he owned the entire Heavencloud Bazaar for years, giving him access to extraordinary amounts of cultivation resources and magical items.

Rumbling filled the air as the light of the Feng Shui compass slammed into Meng Hao’s Supernova Magic. A boom echoed out, and a huge tempest exploded between the two of them. The entire asteroid field trembled violently, and the cultivators in the area gasped and retreated at full speed.

“Meng Hao!!” roared Guru Heavencloud, waving his left hand to send nine stone statues flying out of his sleeve. Their appearance was completely bizarre; they all looked like old men who, after flying out into the air, opened their eyes and began to shine with brilliant light as they shot murderously toward Meng Hao.

Guru Heavencloud’s eyes flickered, and he smacked his bag of holding. Immediately, a crimson dust appeared, which had apparently been refined from blood. The dust writhed, causing blood to immediately begin to spread out in all directions.

However, Guru Heavencloud wasn’t done. He stepped back, waving his sleeve again to send three violet medicinal pills flying out, which radiated boundless pressure as they flew through the air toward Meng Hao.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually, Guru Heavencloud completed all of these numerous actions in the time it takes to blink. All of a sudden, Meng Hao was faced with a raging, murderous aura. The light

from all the various magical items interlocked to create a multicolored wave of light.

“You certainly do qualify to run a bazaar like this in the middle of an asteroid,” Meng Hao said coolly. “And no wonder the other sects and clans don’t want to offend you.... You have a lot of magical items. Well, now I’m looking forward to seeing how many Daoist magics you have.” He took a step forward, and the starstone in his eye melted. In the blink of an eye, he had transformed into a shooting star!

One Thought Stellar Transformation!

He immediately sped through the air, shattering the void, causing strange colors to flash. Booms could be heard as all the magical items which blocked his path were crushed as easily as weeds or twigs!

It started with the nine statutes of the old men, who roared in unison and tried to block Meng Hao in planet-form as he closed in on them. They began to tremble, and cracks spread out across their bodies. In the blink of an eye, they shattered into countless pieces.

Next was the blood-colored dust which had transformed into a sea of blood. It rumbled toward Meng Hao, sending tendrils of blood out to try to bind him up. However, as soon as the tendrils appeared, cracking sounds could be heard, and they collapsed into pieces.

They were completely incapable of causing Meng Hao to falter even half a step!

As for the three medicinal pills, they exploded with electricity, transforming into three violet lightning bolts. However, when they landed on Meng Hao in planet-form, the only effect was that the planet shrank down and eventually vanished, revealing Meng Hao himself, who shone with azure light as he transformed into an azure roc. With a flash, he shot forward, arriving directly in front of Guru Heavencloud!

The speed with which all of this happened is virtually impossible to describe.

“Have any more magical items?” Meng Hao asked, clenching his hand

into a fist and unleashing the Life-Extermination Fist.

A massive boom rang out, and the Heavens trembled. The void shattered, and the Life-Extermination Fist, backed by the power of Meng Hao's cultivation base, instantly caused the sensation of deadly crisis that filled Guru Heavencloud to peak.

And yet, he didn't retreat. Instead, his eyes began to shine with a bright light.

"So, I underestimated you...." he said. Then he exhaled sharply. There was no visible reaction to his exhalation, and yet, the natural laws around him suddenly changed, and the Essences around him gradually formed together into his own personal Daoist magic.

One Breath Shatters the Heavens!

RUUUUUUMMMMMBLLLLLE!

Meng Hao's Life-Extermination Fist slammed into the breath of air, giving rise to shocking vibrations. Meng Hao's eyes suddenly gleamed with a vicious light as he also declined to retreat. Instead, as the backlash power hit him, he took another step forward.

BOOM!

He sent the backlash attack spinning backward again, toward Guru Heavencloud, whose face fell as he suddenly fell back.

Every step that he fell back, Meng Hao took another step forward. One was forced backward over and over, the other advanced step by step!

So far, Meng Hao had seemed to control the entire battle! He was completely and utterly domineering!

*

1. Meng Hao created the Supernova Magic in chapter 942.

Chapter 1160: The Fang Clan Arrives!

In the blink of an eye, the two of them exchanged over a hundred blows. The more Guru Heavencloud fought, the more shocked he became. He discovered that he had lost the initiative, and had no way to get it back. Even more surprising was that he was constantly being forced into retreat by Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's domineering style was on full display as he advanced with relentless attacks. This time, he waved his hand, causing the Ninth Mountain to materialize and crush down toward Guru Heavencloud.

Everyone watching down below was astonished.

"How could Meng Hao be so strong!?!?" Astonished, Guru Heavencloud fell back, eyes flickering coldly as he prepared to launch a divine ability. However, it was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly stopped his current action and then unleashed a punch, staring coldly at Heavencloud the entire time.

When their eyes met, Guru Heavencloud's heart went cold. He tried to dodge back, but was too late.

"Destroy!" Meng Hao said coolly.

Instantly, colors flashed and the wind screamed. Heaven and Earth shook as an indescribable force was unleashed, the explosive destructive power of Meng Hao's fist strikes which he had been holding back until now.

Rumbling sounds echoed up into the air as Meng Hao flashed through the air like lightning. When he appeared in front of Guru Heavencloud, he used the Bedevilment Fist for the first time in the fight.

This was the fist of Self-Immolation, the Bedevilment Fist!

Blood sprayed out of Guru Heavencloud's mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. However, even as he fell back, Meng Hao followed after in pursuit. A moment later, though, he stopped in place and dodged backward at high speed.

In that same moment, the space he had just occupied exploded in a mass of destruction. Had Meng Hao not fallen back just now, he would likely have been mortally wounded.

Seeing Meng Hao evade his killing blow caused Guru Heavencloud's brow to furrow.

"Meng Hao, you qualify to see my most powerful state!" he said. Then he raised his right hand and pushed it down onto his forehead, causing a rumbling sound to echo out as two magical symbols appeared.

Shockingly, he was currently in a sealed state, something he did to delay stepping into the Dao Realm, and in fact, made it possible for him to attempt to step into the Dao Realm at any time he wished.

The first seal faded away rapidly, and as it did, Guru Heavencloud's energy suddenly exploded with increasing power. He quickly surpassed the ordinary great circle of the Ancient Realm, rising up to a shocking degree.

He had no choice but to admit that Meng Hao was strong, perhaps even stronger than himself. Because of that, he had to go all out, and even go to the lengths of removing the seals and removing the pressure that kept his cultivation base restricted.

"Great!" Meng Hao said with a cold snort. "Now that the warmup is over, I guess I'll kill you. Shouldn't be too hard." With that, he extended his right hand and pointed toward Guru Heavencloud, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

Rumbling could be heard as Guru Heavencloud suddenly lurched to a halt. His eyes went wide with shock as Meng Hao waved his finger a second, a third, and even a fourth time.

The Seventh Demon Sealing Hex, Karmic Hexing, immediately caused Karma Threads to appear on Guru Heavencloud. They were already twisted because of his self-sealing, and now, rumbling sounds could be heard inside of him. Stabs of pain shot through him, and he felt as if he were suddenly losing his perception of the world. Even his memories began to grow fuzzy. His cultivation base began to sink down beyond his control, and apparently, his Karma Threads could be severed at any time.

The Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, the Life Death Hexing, caused magical symbols to appear all over him. Unfortunately, Meng Hao didn't succeed in turning Guru Heavencloud into a puppet, but the resulting failure caused Guru Heavencloud to cough up a mouthful of blood. His Karma was collapsing, and his cultivation base was in chaos.

Next was the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex, the transposition of inside and outside. A rift appeared, both absorbing and erupting, creating a sharp blade that slashed at Guru Heavencloud, provoking a bloodcurdling scream as he was directly sliced in half!

Everything happened with shocking speed. Four waves of a finger caused Guru Heavencloud, who was still in the middle of powering up, to be cut down by Meng Hao!

This was the true strength of Meng Hao; to him, the great circle of the Ancient Realm wasn't even worth paying attention to!

However, Guru Heavencloud wasn't actually dead. Despite being cut in half, he was able to merge his two halves back together. And yet, Meng Hao didn't give him a chance to do anything with that opportunity. He waved his right hand, causing the bone-tip spear to appear. Whistling sounds could be heard as the spear stabbed directly toward Guru Heavencloud.

A boom rang out as Guru Heavencloud exploded. His Nascent Divinity flew out of the wreckage of his body, heading down toward one of the magenta-robed cultivators. It stabbed into the man's forehead, causing him to let out a miserable shriek. His facial features twisted for a moment, then went calm, after which he looked up furiously at Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao!!" That cultivator was now Guru Heavencloud. He flew up into the air, roaring in rage. To have been cut down the way he had just now was a complete humiliation. How could he ever have imagined that he would be slaughtered so quickly?

In fact, he had even been forced to use a trump card that nobody had known about, his life-saving magic of Instantaneous Possession!

It was a possession-type Daoist magic that extremely rare, and allowed

him to instantaneously possess the body of another person. Unfortunately, it was an incomplete magic, making it difficult to utilize without great difficulty.

However, in the current situation, he had been left with no choice.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with a strange light as he looked at Guru Heavencloud. Then he smiled slightly and began to walk forward, once again on the offensive.

Guru Heavencloud was incensed. Gnashing his teeth, he shoved down on his forehead again, wiping away the second sealing mark.

In that very instant... an incredible energy suddenly exploded out within Guru Heavencloud. All of a sudden, all of his Soul Lamps appeared!

The Soul Lamps were all extinguished, and shockingly, as they circulated around him, it was obvious... that each of those Soul Lamps was made of a tiny person who looked exactly like Guru Heavencloud!

Even more shocking was that each tiny individual had a sealing mark held in its left hand. It was as if each of those symbols contained different Daoist magics, which were being fed by the tiny figures. Furthermore, each figure also had a magical item floating above its right hand!

There were more than ten different magical items, including flying swords, shields, pearls and tiny pagodas. From the feeling they gave off, all of them were high-grade Immortal treasures.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, now that Guru Heavencloud had been forced into a corner, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a violet helmet.

It looked like a helmet which might be worn by an ordinary mortal soldier. However, it seemed incredibly ancient, as if it had passed through countless years of time. As soon as it appeared in Guru Heavencloud's hands, he put it onto his head.

Almost immediately, his power skyrocketed to a shocking level, and his divine sense experienced explosive growth.

Shockingly, this helmet... was an Ancient Realm magical item!

“Meng Hao! This is my most powerful state. This... is the true great circle of the Ancient Realm. If you can defeat me like this, then I will immediately summon the Door of the Dao Realm!

“If I successfully step into the Dao Realm, then I will cut you down where you stand.... If I fail... then I will be an almighty Quasi-Dao expert. At that time, my life force will begin to dissipate, and the end of my longevity will be within sight. However, killing you in that state... will still be a simple matter!

“You need to think long and hard about whether you wish to continue to fight, or back down!” Guru Heavencloud’s heart was filled with regret. He could tell that Meng Hao was extraordinary and shocking, and now he wasn’t so certain about his judgement regarding the Fang Clan.

The words he had uttered just now had been spoken grudgingly. Originally, he had planned to save those words for someone of his own generation as a coldly uttered ultimatum.

But now, he had no choice but to speak them to Meng Hao, in order to remind him that he shouldn’t continue to act provokingly....

It was at this point that Meng Hao’s expression suddenly flickered, and he looked in the direction of the Fang Clan’s teleportation portal asteroid. Guru Heavencloud sensed the same thing Meng Hao had, and looked over to see that several figures had appeared. He finally sighed inwardly with relief.

He didn’t want to admit to himself that he had even done such a thing, but he had no other option. He would rather clash with the Dao Realm experts of the Fang Clan than face Meng Hao. The four finger attacks Meng Hao had just unleashed filled him with the utmost fear.

Although he was still confident, he couldn’t shake the fear that lurked in his heart. Besides, it would be a great, unrecoupable loss to be forced into an attempted breakthrough right here and now.

Despite being enraged, Guru Heavencloud seemed to force himself

remain under control. He immediately clasped hands and bowed to the figures who were emerging from the teleportation portal.

Fang Shoudao strolled out from the glittering lights, his face grim.

Guru Heavencloud's flickered, and he suddenly chuckled coldly, projecting his booming voice out to say, "Heavencloud of the Heavencloud Bazaar offers greetings, Senior Shoudao!

"Not only have I never offended the Fang Clan, I've never skimmed in my yearly tribute, not even by a little bit. Normally speaking, I accommodate the requirements laid out by your clan without hesitation. I truly respect the Fang Clan!

"Although other clans and powers have tried to recruit me, I haven't joined any of them. I'm always respectful to all of the sects and powers, and even more so when it comes to the Fang Clan.

"And what do I get in return for all of that? My Junior Brother was brutally slaughtered, and others of my disciples were violently killed. All because someone ignored the laws of the bazaar, laws which expressly forbid robbing and stealing!

"What is the meaning of such humiliation!? Senior Shoudao, could it be that the Fang Clan... really wishes to annihilate the Heavencloud Bazaar? After all, moments ago, it was your own Crown Prince who said that he wants the Heavencloud Bazaar to be renamed as the Fang Clan Bazaar!

"I could do nothing in the face of such provocation, because he's nothing but a young lad, and the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. Then he attacked me, and considering the level of my cultivation base and my status, I had to endure for a while. I didn't want to hurt him, and thus, didn't use divine abilities, only magical items.

"However, your Crown Prince was extremely overbearing and menacing. He used sneak attacks to push me into a corner until I could fall back no further. I could have retaliated with deadly attacks on numerous occasions, but didn't, all because I wanted to avoid creating deadly enmity with the Fang Clan!

“However, everyone has their limits, and finally, I retreated far enough to reach mine!

“Senior Shoudao, I’ve already been forced to the point of having no choice but to make a breakthrough. Success would place me in the Dao Realm, failure, the Quasi-Dao Realm. Therefore, I want to know exactly what I did to offend the Fang Clan? Why do you want... to exterminate me!?!?”

“The Heavencloud Bazaar might be small, but we’re no pushovers! Senior, please take the lead in presiding over justice!”

Chapter 1161: The Old Fox

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He ceased any pursuit of Guru Heavencloud, and looked extremely innocent and charming as he clasped hands and bowed to Patriarch Fang Shoudao.

"Junior offers greetings, Patriarch," he said, clearing his throat, as if he wasn't the instigator of the current predicament, and was very curious to see how Fang Shoudao would resolve the situation.

What he actually wanted to know, though was... exactly how important he was to the Fang Clan, and to Fang Shoudao.

He wanted to know if the title of Crown Prince... was actually worth something! Perhaps it was just a title, and wasn't worth anything. Meng Hao's attitude would be dependent on how the question was answered.

If the Fang Clan handled the situation with no regard for him, then he would simply attack. He would show the Fang Clan the true meaning of what an Allheaven Clan Patriarch was!

Fang Shoudao sent a vicious glare in Meng Hao's direction, but then, a moment later, his eyes widened almost imperceptibly. Behind him were five or six clan Elders, including the Grand Elder Fang Tongtian, all of whom heard Guru Heavencloud's enraged words as they walked out of the teleportation portal.

Once again, Guru Heavencloud said, "Senior Shoudao, please take the lead in presiding over justice!"

At the same time, the magenta-robed cultivators in the bazaar all clasped hands toward Fang Shoudao and joined their voices together to say, "Senior Shoudao, please take the lead in presiding over justice!"

Their conjoined voices boomed out like crashing waves, causing an unsightly expression to appear on Fang Shoudao's face. Inwardly, he was slightly suspicious about exactly what was happening. He once again looked over at Meng Hao, expression grim.

After a long moment passed, he gave a cold harrumph and said, "Fang

Tongtian, you and the other Elders resolve this situation.”

Fang Tongtian looked back at him in shock. Even as he stood there hesitating, one of the other Fang Clan Elders stepped forward, clasped hands, and bowed toward Guru Heavencloud.

“Fellow Daoist Heavencloud, please calm yourself. This truly was an instance of carelessness on the part of the Fang Clan. We can explain.” Meng Hao had seen this old man before. He was an Elder from one of the neutral bloodlines. As the words left the man’s mouth, Meng Hao’s expression remained completely calm. However, his eyes turned icy cold.

“Meng Hao, immediately apologize to Guru Heavencloud, and give back the thing you stole!” the Elder said harshly. “As the Crown Prince, you must set a proper example for others! What you’ve done here is simply outrageous!” There were two reasons this Elder rushed to be the first to speak. The first was that he sensed that Patriarch Shoudao wasn’t very pleased with the situation. The second was that he had many connections with the Heavencloud Bazaar, and wished for the situation to be resolved as quickly as possible.

From his perspective, his decision not to side with Meng Hao was quite proper. After all, the Fang Clan wasn’t in a position to be antagonizing too many people, not even for the sake of the Crown Prince. Although Meng Hao had performed some incredible services for the clan, personal interests should never be placed above the interests of the group. Sometimes, it was simply necessary to back down.

He wasn’t the only one who had similar thoughts. The other Elders, even the two who were members of Meng Hao’s bloodline, all felt that the best way to resolve the situation was to chide Meng Hao.

One by one, the Elders began to chime in.

“Hao’er, you shouldn’t have killed anyone here. Apologize immediately! Fellow Daoist Heavencloud, this was just a matter of the Fang Clan’s Crown Prince acting a bit impulsively. Let’s drop the matter, alright?”

“That’s right. Hao’er, what are you doing just standing there? Apologize right now!”

As the Elders spoke one after another, Guru Heavencloud began to laugh coldly in his heart, and also sighed with relief that the Fang Clan members were reasonable people.

In his mind, after Meng Hao apologized, there would be no way for him to pursue the matter further. He himself would be able to sell the jade pendant to the Fang Clan, although for a higher price than before. After all, he couldn't quite resolve himself to the idea of letting Meng Hao away completely scot-free after what he had done.

He felt certain that the Fang Clan wouldn't be willing to antagonize people like himself lightly. After all, his cultivation base was at the point where all he had to do was make a breakthrough, and he could be a powerful enemy to any sect or clan.

Once that happened, unless they went all out to exterminate him, he would be able to cause them unending problems in the future.

Similarly, he didn't dare to deeply offend any of the powerful clans. That was why he always tried to maintain a certain level of imperiousness in his actions. He would never exceed that level too much, but he would likewise never become more submissive.

As soon as he heard what the Elders were saying, his face relaxed, and he clasped hands and bowed to the Fang Clan Elders.

"Since this was a misunderstanding, then I'll let it go," he said with a light, casual sigh. "We can simply blame my Junior Brother for being too boorish, which led him to an unfortunate and terrible death.... As for the stolen item, since the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan took a liking to it, then please, take it. In fact, I don't even want to have it returned. I just hope that the Fang Clan... won't slaughter me and my people!" Although he was smiling bitterly, his heart was filled with venomous malice. In this situation, he was using a tactical retreat to advance his interests, using weakness to defeat strength. He couldn't go so far as to demand that they strip Meng Hao of his title, but he could certainly get them to punish him. He wouldn't just deal him a flesh wound, he would stab him to the bone!

After all, he viewed himself to be the reasonable one. The people who

had died were from the Heavencloud Bazaar. Not only had Meng Hao killed them, he had also stolen their goods. Guru Heavencloud was counting on all of that to lend weight to his demands.

In the end, it seemed to work out exactly as he had expected. In response to Guru Heavencloud's words, the group of Fang Clan Elders frowned and began to rebuke Meng Hao even more harshly.

"Hao'er, this is disgraceful!"

"Apologize right this instant, Hao'er! Do you really want to humiliate the entire clan because of your personal affair!?"

"Meng Hao, get down on your knees!" The last sentence was uttered by the first Elder who had begun speaking moments ago, the one from one of the neutral bloodlines.

Meng Hao's face had remained placid from start to finish. He offered no explanations, instead choosing to stand there looking coldly at the other members of the Fang Clan. To all the other cultivators looking on, Meng Hao seemed to be holding himself in a way that implied that even the Senior members of his clan weren't qualified to talk down to him.

But then Meng Hao heard that one particular Elder say the words 'get on your knees,' and his eyes flickered coldly.

"You're Fang who?" he said. "I forget your given name. In any case, I dare you to repeat what you just said about me kneeling. Go ahead and try it!"

The Elder's eyes flickered with rage, and he was just about to speak when....

"Enough!" said Grand Elder Fang Tongtian, his face darkening, his voice echoing out in all directions. Although his cultivation base was not as high as Guru Heavencloud's, it was still high enough that Guru Heavencloud wouldn't look down on him.

"Elder Fang Shuidan, what you said just now was completely inappropriate," he said, his voice crackling like thunder. "Have you forgotten that you are also surnamed Fang?!"

“As for you, Fellow Daoist Heavencloud, don’t try to take a mile when we give you an inch. Meng Hao is the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. You say he killed some people? Well, even if he killed the entire Heavencloud Bazaar, what would it matter?!”

“You say he stole something from you? How absurd! The Fang Clan lacks nothing! We have no need to go around robbing people! Besides, Meng Hao is our Crown Prince, the future Clan Chief! If he did rob you... then you should think of it as an honor!” All the surrounding cultivators’ eyes went wide when they heard Fang Tongtian’s words. Guru Heavencloud’s eyes gleamed brightly as he glared back at Fang Tongtian.

“Don’t be such an aggravating smart-aleck,” Fang Tongtian continued, his eyes flickering with killing intent. “And don’t put on such a show of histrionics. The Crown Prince of the Fang Clan apologizing to you would be giving you plenty of face as it is. Let’s drop the matter here. And if you disagree... go ahead and say so, then see what happens!” Although Fang Tongtian was no match for Guru Heavencloud, his status in the Fang Clan was such that he could easily cow Guru Heavencloud with his words.

Fang Tongtian’s diatribe caused the other Fang Clan Elders to stare in shock. The other surrounding cultivators were even more astonished.

Even Meng Hao had a strange look in his eyes as he looked over at Fang Tongtian. If he remembered correctly, Fang Tongtian had been punished, locked away in secluded meditation because of the chaos that had broken out on Planet East Victory on his watch. For him to appear here now indicated that he must have been pardoned.

Guru Heavencloud glared at Fang Tongtian, then began to laugh in fury. He had never imagined that the Fang Clan’s Grand Elder would dare to speak to him in such a way. He was so disrespectful that it almost seemed as if he didn’t care at all about Guru Heavencloud.

He had practiced cultivation for ages, and in the many years after taking control of the Heavencloud Bazaar, he had had dealings with all the major sects and clans. They were always amiable, and neither he nor they ever tried to offend or antagonize each other.

They always spoke very politely to him, so this was the first time he had ever heard any person from any sect or clan talk to him in such a way.

As his angry laughter rang out, Guru Heavencloud seemed to struggle to control himself. He took a deep breath and then clasped hands and bowed deeply to Fang Shoudao.

Gritting his teeth, he angrily said, "Senior Shoudao, is this the Fang Clan's stance in this matter? You kill my disciples and steal my belongings. Do you want to force me into a corner?!?!"

"Senior Shoudao, I once again ask for you to take the lead—" Before, Guru Heavencloud could even finish speaking, Fang Shoudao suddenly flicked his sleeve.

"Shut the hell up!" he said, his voice booming like thunder. The entire asteroid field shook, and the Heavencloud Bazaar trembled on the verge of collapse.

Numerous surrounding cultivators coughed up blood, and Guru Heavencloud was shoved backward, blood spraying out of his mouth, his eyes shining with shock and disbelief.

It wasn't that he had never encountered Dao Realm experts before. On the contrary, he had actually met most of them. Considering his status and cultivation base, Dao Realm cultivators usually treated him very respectfully and even kindly.

This was the first time that anyone in the Dao Realm had ever disregarded him in this way.

When Fang Tongtian saw Fang Shoudao's burst of anger, his eyes flickered, but he didn't say anything. However, the other Elders' faces fell, and their hearts suddenly seized with fear. That was especially true of the Elder who had rebuked Meng Hao and told him to get on his knees. That man's heart began to pound with confusion. From his perspective, Meng Hao had performed services for the clan, but even the Crown Prince, a direct bloodline descendant of the Fang Clan, would be forced to back down in the face of the interests of the clan as a whole. And yet... Fang Shoudao's attitude seemed to be the opposite of that.

Fang Shoudao suddenly turned to look at the clan members responsible for maintaining the teleportation portal. “Let me ask you, when Hao’er sent word to us, what exactly did he tell you to say?”

The clan members immediately began to tremble, and one of them responded, “The Crown Prince... he said... to ask the Patriarch, you sir, whether or not you wanted to change the name of the Heavencloud Bazaar to the Fang Clan Bazaar....”

Fang Shoudao paused to think for a brief moment, then looked up and spoke, his booming words echoing out through the entire asteroid field, and even echoing out into the void beyond. “The Heavencloud Bazaar is in collusion with enemy clans! They plotted to harm the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan in order to foment civil war in Ninth Mountain and Sea. They even falsely accused our Crown Prince of robbing them, all with the intention of provoking us. This crime cannot be forgiven! Transmit orders to the entire Fang Clan. Exterminate the Heavencloud Bazaar. Leave no one alive! Henceforth, this place will be called... the Fang Clan Bazaar!”

Guru Heavencloud’s mind spun, and his face was filled with an expression of shock and disbelief.

“Senior Shoudao!!” he cried.

Chapter 1162: Heavencloud Steps into the Dao!

Guru Heavencloud wasn't the only one who was shocked. All of the cultivators in the Heavencloud Bazaar were completely shaken by Fang Shoudao's words, and could scarcely believe what they were hearing.

The title of Crown Prince was simply that, a title. And yet, the Fang Clan seemed ready to go to war, and even make an enemy of someone who could step into the Dao Realm at any time.

It completely defied reason!

Even the other Fang Clan Elders gasped in response.

"Patriarch, this...." The Elder who had reprimanded Meng Hao the most severely began to speak, his voice hoarse. However, even as the words left his mouth, other Fang Clan disciples stepped into the teleportation portal to go spread word to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory.

"Senior Shoudao, sir, what's going on?" asked Guru Heavencloud, his face flickering. "This was just a misunderstanding. Didn't we already make that clear...?" His heart was now starting to thump; he actually didn't want to be forced to break through to the Dao Realm. After all, it was a critical matter of life and death.

"The only thing that was explained clearly was why the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan attacked you," Fang Shoudao responded immediately. "What will happen now is that you will be punished for daring to use deadly force to try to punish the Crown Prince!"

"My Fang Clan's Crown Prince, Hao'er, has incredible latent talent, and is matchless in the entire world. He is a qilin of the Fang Clan, and of all the members of the Junior generation, I favored his grandfather the most. His father, is also one of the young lads I look most kindly upon. And as for Meng Hao himself, I will risk my life for him, for the sake of protecting a Chosen of the Fang Clan!"

"He is our future Clan Chief!"

“He is our future Patriarch!

“He is the most, most precious person in the entire clan! The most, most, most cherished one of us. The most, most, most, most important person!” Fang Shoudao’s proud voice echoed out in all directions, causing the other members of the Fang Clan to stare with wide-open mouths. All of the other cultivators in the area were also looking on in shock.

Even Meng Hao had to clear his throat. His face was a bit flushed, not with bashfulness, but with true embarrassment....

“Anyone who dares to provoke him is provoking the entire Fang Clan!” Fang Shoudao declared. “Anyone who dares to harm him, will provoke the Fang Clan into instant action, even if that action is a war of mutual destruction!

“Hao’er is absolutely one-of-a-kind in the Fang Clan, and there’s not enough time in the day to show our care and affection for him. Heavencloud, you brat, I can’t believe you actually dared to berate Hao’er, much less slander him! I’m going to kill you!” His voice echoed out in all directions, pouring into the ears of every person present, causing them to stare in shock.

Virtually everyone who was listening got the impression... that he was actually ingratiating himself to Meng Hao. For him to say such things in this situation really seemed strange....

In fact, it was obvious that he wasn’t making this speech to the bystanders. It was clear that he was... speaking directly to Meng Hao.

However, this in itself caused everyone to be even more shocked than before. To hear such fawning words coming out of Fang Shoudao’s mouth, especially to a member of the clan’s Junior generation, actually revealed an even more stunning truth!

Guru Heavencloud’s heart was pounding, and from Fang Shoudao’s words, he could tell that there was something he didn’t know about. Obviously, Meng Hao’s status far exceeded that of a simple Crown Prince. He was obviously so important that Fang Shoudao was willing to publically brown-nose him. This left Guru Heavencloud shocked to a

profound degree.

“And you!” Fang Shoudao continued, turning to glare angrily at the Elder who had reprimanded Meng Hao earlier. “How dare you ask the future Clan Chief, the future Patriarch, the clan’s current immaculate qilin, our matchless Chosen... to kneel! Are you really surnamed Fang? Fudge! If I’d known you were this kind of person, I wouldn’t have arranged a beloved partner for your grandfather all those years ago! If your father hadn’t been born, then I wouldn’t have to deal with you, you spineless coward!”

The Elder began to shake, and the blood drained from his face. He was just about to offer an explanation when Fang Shoudao turned back to Meng Hao, a kind, albeit strange, look in his eyes. Seemingly excited, he laughed loudly and said, “Hao’er, how do you think we should punish this bastard?”

“Patriarch–”

Before Meng Hao could say anything more, Fang Shoudao glared at him. “Don’t call me Patriarch,” he said. “Call me Great-Grandpa. That’s a bit more cordial.”

Meng Hao cleared his throat. “Great-Grandpa, allow me to take care of him.”

With that, he waved his finger toward the Elder, causing the old man to instantly tremble. Although nothing happened visibly, the Dao seed inside of him suddenly vanished. Instantly, the man seemed to grow older, and his vitality seemed to wane.

Although his cultivation base was not harmed, the wave of Meng Hao’s finger had cut off his path to the Allheaven!

Even the old man didn’t really understand what he had lost. However, in an Allheaven Clan, what Meng Hao had just done was actually the most severe type of punishment!

Fang Shoudao’s heart flip-flopped, and he took a deep breath. After taking a close look at the Elder, all of his previous suspicions were dispelled, and he looked back at Meng Hao with indescribable excitement.

Then he waved his sleeve, causing the whole asteroid field to shake as a beam of light spread out to cover the entire area, completely locking it down.

At the same time, light began to rise up from the Fang Clan's teleportation portal as hundreds of figures began to emerge. This was the Fang Clan. Even Fang Wei was present, along with Ancient Realm experts of the Elder generation.

"Wipe out the Heavencloud Bazaar!" Fang Shoudao said, waving his sleeve. Heaven and Earth rumbled, and wild colors flashed. Instantly, all of the teleportation portals on all of the asteroids were sealed, regardless of which sect or clan they belonged to.

It was now impossible for anyone from outside the asteroid field to interfere.

The cultivators who were not affiliated with the Heavencloud Bazaar were shocked, and did nothing to fight back against the Fang Clan. They were merely passers-by, and as long as they did nothing to help the Heavencloud Bazaar, they would not be affected.

The magenta-robed cultivators' faces turned deathly pale. It was hard to say who did it first, but they all began to flee. However, the Fang Clan cultivators immediately flew out to give chase, cold smiles on their faces.

"Surrender and we won't kill you!" Threatening voices immediately rang out from the Fang Clan, causing everything to shake, and the void to vibrate. Surprisingly, azure light was emanating out from the members of the Fang Clan. Although it was faint, everyone could see it, and it caused them to feel a pressure and a trembling within their souls. It was as if... that azure color commanded the ultimate respect!

When Guru Heavencloud saw what was happening, his face fell, and he backed up. However, even as he did, Fang Shoudao snorted coldly and prepared to attack. However, Meng Hao stepped forward first.

"Great-Grandpa, allow me," he said, his voice echoing about. Then he shot forward and resumed fighting with Guru Heavencloud. Within a few breaths of time, the two of them had already exchanged hundreds of

moves, causing rumbling sounds to echo about. Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing the Essence of Divine Flame, a flame sea that engulfed Heavencloud's Soul Lamps and magical items.

Guru Heavencloud's Ancient treasure was then hit by the azure light from Meng Hao, causing it to tremble and crack. Meng Hao charged forward, blasting out with the God-Slaying Fist.

Wild colors flashed, and a screaming wind kicked up. All of the other fighting cultivators in the area began to tremble, and when they looked over, they gasped.

It was as if all the energy of Heaven and Earth in the entire area was being sucked into Meng Hao's fist. As his fist descended, it felt as if the will of Heaven were descending.

No matter what Guru Heavencloud tried to do to fight back, it was useless. The magical items held by his Soul Lamps shattered and transformed into ash, and his helmet was crushed. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he tumbled backward, his body half pulverized.

When Fang Tongtian saw this, his eyes went wide, and as for Fang Shoudao, a strange light could be seen in his eyes. Although he mostly understood what had happened, and had braced himself for something like this, to see Meng Hao wielding this type of strength was shocking.

"Fang Clan, you're forcing my hand!" roared Guru Heavencloud. Looking around, he saw that most of his Heavencloud Bazaar disciples had surrendered, and that he had essentially lost control. More members of the Fang Clan were pouring out through their teleportation portal. Guru Heavencloud began to laugh bitterly, even crazily. By now, he realized that he had offended someone who he could not afford to have offended. Regret was useless, so he roared and, without any further hesitation, pointed his finger up toward the Heavens.

"Dao!" he roared. It was only a single word, but when it left his mouth, everything shook violently. An indescribable energy of Heaven and Earth descended, swirling around him, creating a force that pushed Meng Hao

away, making it impossible for him to get close.

Everyone around Guru Heavencloud was trembling under the incredible pressure that pushed down from the starry sky.

Fang Shoudao approached Meng Hao, looked up at Guru Heavencloud, and then slowly began to explain: "Watch closely. This is what it's like to step into the Dao. I forced him into this so that you could have a chance to see for yourself what it's like. When your time comes, this experience will prove to be quite helpful. Your future is tied to the future of the entire clan."

"Dao!!" Guru Heavencloud roared again. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and the pressure from up above grew more intense. The void vibrated, and ripples spread out in all directions. Layers of natural laws became visible, as well as numerous Essences.

Beams of light shot up from Guru Heavencloud, rising higher up, growing more numerous and scintillating....

Guru Heavencloud's energy rose, and the pressure of Heaven and Earth grew stronger. As of this moment, it was as if he were the center of attention of all the starry sky. Currently, not even Fang Shoudao could have tried to fight him.

Whenever someone in the great circle of the Ancient Realm stepped into the Dao, they were essentially invincible. At the same time, that person could do nothing to interrupt the process; any attempt to do so could influence their chances of success!

Failure... could not be endured!

"It's hard to say whether he'll succeed or not...." Fang Shoudao said with a sigh. "Stepping into the Dao is very difficult."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked at Guru Heavencloud. It was almost as if he were watching himself in the future, trying to step into the Dao.

"Dao!!!" Guru Heavencloud's final shout caused the starry sky to tremble and roil as a huge vortex formed. Within that vortex crackled countless

lightning bolts, and just beyond it was what appeared to be a path.

It was impossible to tell exactly where that path led....

“That is the Dao, and also... a path!” 1 As Fang Shoudao’s voice echoed out, Guru Heavencloud shot forward, going for broke as he charged into the vortex and stepped onto the path.

*

1. Don’t forget that the character “Dao” also means “road” or “way”.

Chapter 1163: Failing To Step Into the Dao!

A flash of concentration appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as he looked closely at everything that was happening. The Dao Stepping Path was a critical juncture when stepping from the Ancient Realm into the Dao Realm. Despite all of his experience with cultivation, Meng Hao had never seen anyone step into the Dao before.

Guru Heavencloud had offended someone he should never have offended, and now had no choice but to challenge this path. That was his only chance at getting out of the situation alive.

Heaven and Earth rumbled, and the starry sky shook. Most of the magenta-robed cultivators in the Heavencloud Bazaar had chosen to surrender. Those who had not were easily swept over by the Fang Clan. By now, the Heavencloud Bazaar had truly become the Fang Clan Bazaar!

Guru Heavencloud himself was the only survivor. He was now charging toward the vortex at high speed. However, as he neared, countless lightning bolts converged and shot toward him.

It was a majestic sight. Shocking peals of thunder echoed out as the lightning bolts fell. If you looked closely, you would be able to see outlines of people inside the lightning bolts.

Although it was impossible to make them out clearly, they were clearly mighty.... Meng Hao's pupils constricted the moment he saw them.

A boom rang out, and Guru Heavencloud shuddered, blood spraying out of his mouth. However, he was currently in a strange and bizarre state; natural laws and Essences swirled around him. He roared as he slammed through the lightning bolts and attempted to step into the vortex.

He knew that doing so was the first task he had to accomplish in order to step into the Dao. Although even greater dangers would arise after he did so, taking that first step was what would qualify him to take a second.

"If I step into the Dao successfully, then I'll use the power of the Dao Realm to flee this place. I'll go join the Ji Clan, and afterward, my enmity

with the Fang Clan will be irreconcilable!

“If I fail, I won’t be able to flee. Therefore, I will stay here and slaughter as many members of the Fang Clan as I can. I’ll make sure they’re buried with me!” Guru Heavencloud’s plan was set. At the moment, he chose not to contemplate exactly why everything had turned out the way it did, nor did he consider that it was actually his own actions which had led to this series of events.

There was only one thing on his mind!

Kill Meng Hao!

All of his rancor was focused completely on Meng Hao, and whether or not he succeeded in stepping into the Dao, his main desire was that before he died, he be able to kill him.

He roared as he sailed toward the vortex. Booms rang out and lightning crashed. The speed of his charge gradually lessened.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he stood off in the distance, watching the scene thoughtfully.

Fang Shoudao stood next to him, eyes also focused on the vortex up in the void.

“Guru Heavencloud has been ready to step into the Dao for years now,” he said coolly as he watched Guru Heavencloud approaching the vortex. “He just never dared to take that first step. Instead, he used his situation as a form of protection.... Perhaps you could say that I’m helping him out, helping him to take that first step. Of course, there are a total of nine tribulations when stepping into the Dao. This is merely the first tribulation, the Lightning Tribulation.”

Guru Heavencloud was spattered in blood, and his aura was weakening. However, the feeling he gave off was that he would burst out with power on the verge of death. He roared, and shockingly, layers of mist and cloud formed around him, which alternated between transforming into rainwater and mist. Those were... his Essences!

As for what Essences they were, nobody could tell, since they were still in

the process of brewing. However, if Guru Heavencloud stepped into the vortex and then walked the path to the end, then his Essences would fully and truly form.

How far one could tread on the path, and the final Realm one ended up in, was dependant on how many Essences one possessed. Of course, the further one walked, the higher the chances of failure.

A boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Guru Heavencloud's mouth. At the critical moment, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then pushed down on his forehead. Immediately, his cultivation base erupted, and he grew rapidly until he was several dozen meters tall. Then, he shot onward toward the vortex. More lightning fell, and as it slammed into him, he began to shrink back down in size. Soon, he was only about thirty meters away from the vortex, and was already back to his normal height.

His eyes shone with a light of madness. Roaring, he went all-out, holding back nothing to charge forward. However, in the instant that he stepped into the vortex, a blast of mist shot out from inside. It transformed into a pike which pushed toward Guru Heavencloud. It barely poked him, but he let out a bloodcurdling scream nonetheless as he was sent tumbling backward.

"NO!!" As he fell back, countless lightning bolts descended, completely inundating him.

Fang Shoudao shook his head. "The second tribulation is coming, the Weapon Tribulation. This Heavencloud... has an unstable Dao heart. His essences are not converged, and his willpower is shaky. It's not likely that he'll succeed in the Weapon Tribulation." Guru Heavencloud screamed as the mist pike continued to pursue him. The Heavens trembled, and Guru Heavencloud began to laugh with bitterness as he fought back desperately. At the same time, more mist shot out from within the vortex.

This time, the mist formed into eight sharp weapons: saber, spear, sword, halberd, axe, hatchet, hook and trident. As soon as they appeared, they joined with the pike, transforming into nine beams of light that shot

toward Guru Heavencloud.

By this point, the surrounding cultivators were all coming to the same conclusion: Guru Heavencloud... was not going to succeed!

“I refuse to accept this!” he shrieked, fighting back with all his might. He refused to back down, despite the blood spraying from his mouth. With every wound that was inflicted on him, some of the mist of natural law and Essence that surrounded him would merge into his body, restoring him. However... that restoration ate away at his power of natural law and Essence, causing them to grow weaker and dissipate.

When they fully disappeared, then that would indicate... that his attempt to step into the Dao... had failed!

“The third tribulation is coming....” Fang Shoudao said, looking into the vortex.

Almost in the same moment that he spoke, shocking rumbling sounds could be heard from within the vortex, and four figures appeared.

Each of these figures wore a black suit of armor. It was impossible to see their facial features, but all of them emanated indescribably murderous auras that caused the faces of all onlookers to flicker with shock.

“The Mountain and Sea War Generals!” Fang Shoudao murmured, his eyes burning with fervor.

As Meng Hao looked at the four figures, all of a sudden, the Demon Sealing Hexing magic inside of him began to stir.

“Life Death Hexing?” he thought. Almost as soon as he noticed the connection, the four figures suddenly turned toward him. Within their helmets, their eyes suddenly flashed with a strange light.

As their gazes met, Meng Hao’s mind trembled. Suddenly, it wasn’t just the Demon Sealing Hexing magic that stirred inside of him, the Paragon’s blood inside of his Nirvana Fruit was also affected!

Gradually, he realized that there was some strange connection between himself and these four figures.

“It’s almost like... I can control them....” he murmured, shaken.

“What did you just say?” Fang Shoudao asked, looking at him with wide eyes.

In the same moment that Meng Hao was mentally shaken, Guru Heavencloud laughed shrilly, a laughter filled with desperation and madness. By now, he had also realized that he could not succeed. Stepping into the Dao was a difficult thing. To any cultivator of the great circle of the Ancient Realm, it was a deadly test that far exceeded the previous challenges of lamp extinguishing.

The Ancient Realm was a terrifying place for any cultivator to be. After reaching that Realm, they faced one deadly crisis after another. The only way to be free of such an existence was to successfully step into the Dao Realm.

“Meng Hao, all of this is your fault!!” Heavencloud raged. His bitter laughter was tinged with even more madness than before, and his eyes were bright red. As of this moment, he chose... what every person who failed to step into the Dao chose to do.

Instead of hopelessly trying to continue to break through, he sucked the remainder of his natural laws and Essences into his body, which would form his life force in the Quasi-Dao Realm!

Anyone who failed to step into the Dao, and instead became a Quasi-Dao cultivator, would have a severely limited longevity, which usually was linked to how many natural laws and Essences remained after their failure.

The more they had, the more longevity they would possess. If they had too few... then the number of years they had left could be counted on a single hand.

Laughing bitterly, Guru Heavencloud sucked his breakthrough aura back into his body, along with the surrounding mist of natural law and Essence.

As he retracted the aura, the nine mist weapons suddenly halted in place, ceasing their attack.

Guru Heavencloud's body emitted rumbling sounds as the natural laws and Essence merged into him. Then, his power erupted, passing the great circle of the Ancient Realm and reaching... the Quasi-Dao Realm!!

He was now in a Realm which was still half a step away from the Dao Realm, and yet vastly exceeded the great circle of the Ancient Realm. After all, he still had natural laws and Essences.

Although they were incomplete, they were still shocking, to the point that... even single-essence Dao Realm experts would find it troublesome to fight him. After all... Quasi-Dao experts were people who lived without hope, and descended into madness!

They knew exactly when they would die, as did everyone around them. And thus, they were insane!

Bitter laughter echoed out as Guru Heavencloud's body trembled and his aura changed. His life force faded away, and he was quickly surrounded by an aura of death!

His longevity was consumed by the natural laws and Essences. Assuming he didn't use damaging divine abilities, or engage in combat, he would live at most about one hundred years. When that time passed... he would be dead in body and spirit, without the slightest remnant of his existence left in the world.

To mortals, a hundred years was an entire lifetime. But to cultivators, a hundred years would pass very quickly.

Of course, if he ended up fighting in battle, his remaining time would decrease even more quickly.

"Limited longevity! Enmities must be avenged! Grievances must be requited!" Guru Heavencloud laughed. It was a laughter more ugly than weeping. His eyes bulged, and the aura of death surrounding him grew even stronger. Madness filled his eyes as his deranged laughter echoed out in all directions, transforming into a tempest that caused all light to dim, and the Heavens to tremble. Boundless ripples spread out.

Guru Heavencloud's energy was now greater than it ever had been in his

entire life.

“Meng Hao!” he cried venomously, looking over at Meng Hao with boundless killing intent.

Chapter 1164: Eternal Patriarch!

In the next instant, Guru Heavencloud stepped toward Meng Hao. Before he could get close, Fang Shoudao snorted and prepared to make a move. But then, Meng Hao reached out and blocked his path.

“Hao’er, you....” Fang Shoudao looked at Meng Hao, and noticed the strange look in his eyes as he looked up at the vortex.

The vortex was slowing down, apparently having lost interest in Heavencloud. It began to dissipate, the nine sharp weapons having already returned back inside.

However... the four black-armored figures were still standing outside, almost as if they had forgotten about the vanishing vortex. They were all looking at Meng Hao, as if he was of incredible interest to them.

Meng Hao’s heart was pounding. He didn’t have time to pay any heed to Guru Heavencloud. The sight of the four black-armored figures caused the Paragon’s blood inside of him to seethe, and the Demon Sealing Hexing magic to churn. Shockingly, he was somehow connected to those four figures.

It was an invisible connection, but Meng Hao was clearly able to sense the confusion which existed in the four of them.

He took a deep breath and said, “Come....” The instant the word left his mouth, the black-armored figures began to move. In the blink of an eye, they appeared directly in front of Meng Hao!!

Their speed vastly exceeded that of Guru Heavencloud with his towering murderous aura. Before he could even get close, the four black-armored figures were directly in front of Meng Hao.

This development caused Guru Heavencloud to stare in shock. He might only have one hundred years of longevity left, but he still believed that there was nothing left in the world that could shock or astonish him. However, as of this moment, his heart was pounding.

“This....”

He wasn't the only shocked one. Fang Shoudao gasped, and his eyes filled with an expression of disbelief. The other surrounding cultivators, including the members of the Fang Clan, were all gaping in astonishment.

How could they not be, considering that these four black-armored figures were... the third tribulation when stepping into the Dao!!

Now, that third tribulation wasn't dissipating, but listening to Meng Hao's words as if they were orders. The scene that was playing out left everyone's minds reeling.

"This is a trick!" Guru Heavencloud roared, continuing to charge toward Meng Hao. "There's no way that you can control the Mountain and Sea War—" However, before he could even finish speaking, he suddenly shivered as if he had just seen an evil spirit.

That was because he was currently witnessing the four terrifying armored figures suddenly... kneeling to Meng Hao!!

They bent down on one knee and lifted their right hands high into the air. That was... the most respectful form of salute that could be given in the ancient Immortal World. Anyone who used such a form of salute was showing that they were a complete inferior offering wholehearted respect to a superior!

Massive waves of shock battered Fang Shoudao's mind as he gaped at the scene. He simply couldn't believe what he was seeing. Actually, he knew a bit about the history of his clan, and knew of the word 'Allheaven'.

However, there were still many aspects of the matter that were unclear to him. Even his own cultivation base had been affected by the momentous bloodline changes not too long ago. A Dao seed had appeared inside of him as well, prompting an investigation by himself and Fang Yanxu. They had even gone to pay respects to the clone of the first generation Patriarch, and that was where they had gotten their answer.

"The clan's blood has changed; the will of the Patriarch has come. He is the source of the Dao, the Fang Clan's eternal Patriarch!" That was what the first generation Patriarch's clone had said. At the time, Fang Shoudao didn't quite understand what he meant. But as soon as he laid eyes on

Meng Hao earlier, his heart had been shaken to the core. There was something completely shocking about Meng Hao, some aura that filled Fang Shoudao with fanaticism, and the desire to offer worship.

Meng Hao could control the life or death of every member of the Fang Clan, and could also control the Dao seeds within their blood!

Even more astonishing to Fang Shoudao was that Meng Hao was clearly not an ordinary clan member any more. He was like a shining light, and the closer Fang Shoudao got to him, the more he felt as if his blood were boiling. Furthermore, that desire to offer worship increased dramatically!

In that first moment of shock, he thought back to what the first generation Patriarch's clone had said.

Shortly thereafter, Meng Hao had wiped away the Dao seed in the Elder, and Fang Shoudao's doubts were completely dispelled. At that point, he was certain... that Meng Hao was the reason for all the transformations that had occurred in the Fang Clan. He was what the first generation Patriarch's clone had referred to as... the source of the Dao in the bloodline, the Fang Clan's eternal Patriarch!

All of that was shocking in and of itself. But even more shocking was what had happened just now with the black-armored figures. Fang Shoudao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

Hao'er can actually make the Mountain and Sea War Generals kneel before him.... He can actually control them.... That means that from now on, whenever someone from the Fang Clan tries to step into the Dao, the third tribulation... will be much easier to pass!

The surrounding cultivators and Fang Clan members were all staring in shock at the scene playing out in front of them. It was something which they would never forget.

"Hao'er, you... you can control them?" Fang Shoudao asked, sounding uncertain.

"Kill him!" Meng Hao said suddenly, wanting to know the answer himself. Eyes flashing, he pointed directly at Guru Heavencloud, his killing

intent swirling.

Meng Hao's action caused Guru Heavencloud's scalp to feel like it was about to explode, and he fell back. He might only have a hundred years of longevity left, and was already mad, but that didn't mean he actually wished to die.

Dying in this moment, and dying a hundred years from this moment, were two very different things. He obviously wanted to live as long as possible, so therefore, when he saw the black-armored figures rising up in response to Meng Hao pointing, when he sensed their towering murderous auras, when they began to head in his direction, Guru Heavencloud was finally... afraid.

All of the fear and terror of Meng Hao that he had been keeping under control until now finally exploded out!

"Who... who is he really? He can mobilize the entire Fang Clan for war, he can make Fang Shoudao suck up to him, and he can actually control the third tribulation Mountain and Sea War Generals!!"

The last part was the most critical aspect as far as Guru Heavencloud was concerned. When he saw that Meng Hao could control the very Dao Tribulation that he himself had failed at, his entire world was overturned. It was as if everything he knew had crumbled away.

Even as he fell back, the four black-armored figures closed in. Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering murderous auras exploded out from them. It was merely energy, and yet colors flashed and the starry sky shook. Blood sprayed out of Guru Heavencloud's mouth, and he instantly grew five or six years older.

A strange light appeared in Fang Shoudao's eyes as he murmured, "According to the legends, the Mountain and Sea War Generals were cultivators who served the Paragons, and killed hosts of Outsiders on the ancient battlefields. Supposedly, they built up stupendous killing intent, to the point where they controlled the will of death! Obviously, the legends are true!"

Quasi-Dao experts were incredibly powerful, and under normal

circumstances could never be taken lightly. But when fighting the Mountain and Sea War Generals... it was a completely different matter!

Their energy alone was enough to reduce Guru Heavencloud's longevity by five or six years. That alone attested to how terrifying they were, and left Guru Heavencloud in complete terror. He performed a double-handed incantation gesture and waved his finger in front of him, causing Essence power to erupt out. Just as he was about to begin fighting, one of the black-armored figures lifted its right hand and then made a chopping motion.

That chopping motion caused the starry sky to rumble, as if it were about to be ripped apart. All of Guru Heavencloud's defenses crumbled. His body trembled, and in the blink of an eye, he aged by another twenty years!!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as the second black-armored figure made a chopping motion as well, followed by the third figure. The fourth black-armored figure followed up with a fourth fluid chopping motion!

Guru Heavencloud was completely incapable of evading these three strikes, nor could he resist them or fight back. Rumbling sounds filled the air, and more blood sprayed out of his mouth. He immediately aged by twenty years, forty years, sixty years, eighty years!

By this point, he had only a few dozen years of longevity left. He now looked completely ancient, and was surrounded by an aura of death.

"The Mountain and Sea War Generals rebuke the Quasi-Dao Realm!" Fang Shoudao observed the four black-armored figures with gleaming eyes. He could almost see images from some ancient era, in which a vast number of these Mountain and Sea War Generals had fought with the Paragons on countless battlefields.

Meng Hao's mind also trembled as he watched the scene play out. Suddenly, Guru Heavencloud threw his head back and laughed bitterly.

"Meng Hao, do you dare to fight one-on-one with me? If I die in this battle, at least I can die with no regrets!" He feared the Mountain and Sea War Generals, and how easily they could defeat him. He knew beyond the

shadow of a doubt that he was going to die, but before that happened, he wanted to cut down Meng Hao!

Meng Hao looked away from the four black-armored figures toward Guru Heavencloud, and his eyes flickered with the desire to fight.

“You want to fight!? Allow me to fulfil your desire!” He began to stride forward, causing rumbling sounds to shake the starry sky. Shocking azure light rose up, and in the blink of an eye, he was in front of Guru Heavencloud. Immortal mountains descended, and the Supernova Magic exploded out, along with a Violet Moon. The Ninth Mountain appeared, and the Blood Demon roared. It all transformed into a maelstrom which rumbled out toward Guru Heavencloud.

He attacked relentlessly and with a completely domineering air. The wave of a hand caused the Essence of Divine Flame to rumble out, creating a burning sea of flames. Guru Heavencloud’s face went pale, and he performed an incantation gesture, summoning countless divine abilities. In the blink of an eye, he and Meng Hao exchanged hundreds of blows.

The battle was shocking, causing numerous asteroids in the asteroid field to shatter. The void vibrated, and the starry sky rumbled. At the same time, Guru Heavencloud’s longevity continued to waste away.

Thirteen years. Nine years. Six years. Three years... One year!

Ten months. Seven months. Five months. Three months.... One month!!

Twenty-seven days. Twenty days. Thirteen days. Six days.... One day!!

Meng Hao’s qi and blood surged, and his desire to fight soared. He took a step forward and punched out.

It was the Life-Extermination Fist, followed by the Bedevilment Fist, and then the God-Slaying Fist!

“DIE!” he roared, his killing intent surging.

These three fists strikes filled Guru Heavencloud with a sense of impending doom that was no weaker than what he had felt from the

black-armored figures. He threw his head back and roared bitterly, attacking with all his strength. Meng Hao was half a step into the Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm, and Heavencloud was a gasping, seriously wounded Quasi-Dao cultivator!

They were like two meteors which slammed into each other, causing colors to flash up above, and a huge wind to blast out.

A massive tempest sprang up, obscuring everyone's vision. However, when it cleared, Meng Hao was hovering there in the starry sky, looking every bit like some sort of celestial warrior!

In front of him was Guru Heavencloud, blood oozing out of his mouth as he looked at Meng Hao, his expression conflicted. He was filled with regret as his body cracked into pieces and transformed into ash that... faded out into the starry sky!

It was at this point that the four black-armored figures clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

Fang Shoudao and the other members of the Fang Clan suddenly felt something inside of them, an azure light which shone out, just like Meng Hao's!

"Eternal Patriarch of the Fang Clan...." Fang Shoudao murmured excitedly.

Chapter 1165: The Whole Clan Pays Respects!

Guru Heavencloud was destroyed in body and soul!

When he died, the four black-armored figures bowed to Meng Hao and then transformed into beams of prismatic light that shot back into the vortex. The vortex had long since ceased rotating, and now looked like a black hole in the void. The four figures disappeared inside, and the black hole vortex vanished.

As it did, the ripples in the starry sky faded away, and the void ceased to tremble. The pressure that came with stepping into the Dao disappeared, and everything returned to normal.

However... the Heavencloud Bazaar forever had a new name. It became a new stronghold of the Fang Clan.

Fang Shoudao took a deep breath and concealed the expression of shock which had been pasted onto his face. He looked deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, then waved his hand, causing the shield to be removed from around the asteroid field. The teleportation portals were no longer sealed. Immediately, the terrified cultivators in the area began to leave.

As they did, they glanced over at Meng Hao with fear and dread. To them, Meng Hao was not some Immortal Realm cultivator, but instead a powerful expert of the Senior generation. He was an almighty figure who was completely removed from them.

As can be imagined, the departure of all those cultivators almost immediately caused the news about Guru Heavencloud offending Meng Hao, and the resulting carnage, to begin to spread throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

It also ensured that Meng Hao's name once again was talked about far and wide. All clans and sects were shaken, and everyone realized that Meng Hao was a person who could not be considered to be in the Junior generation anymore. He was on the same level as Quasi-Dao experts, or

perhaps needed to be treated as even higher than that.

The Fang Clan's attitude in the whole matter explained everything. Everyone knew that if someone dared to treat Meng Hao with hostility, the entire Fang Clan would respond with explosive violence.

As for the magenta-robed cultivators who used to be disciples of the Heavencloud Bazaar, they stood there trembling, having long since surrendered. They were assimilated into the Fang Clan, who had numerous ways of ensuring their future loyalty and devotion.

The crowds departed, and soon, the only people left behind in the asteroid field were members of the Fang Clan. There were a few hundred in total, all of whom were now looking toward Meng Hao with fanatical devotion.

This was... their Crown Prince!!

He could fight with Quasi-Dao experts, and could even kill them. With a cultivation base and an identity like that, it was enough to cause the whole clan to be shaken and filled with zeal.

Most important was the Dao seed inside all of the Fang Clan cultivators. That naturally caused them to be even more respectful toward Meng Hao, although it was on a subconscious level that most of them weren't aware of.

It was a strong subconscious desire, but after witnessing the grand display of Meng Hao slaughtering a Quasi-Dao cultivator, it erupted out, causing their eyes to overflow with fanatical approval of Meng Hao.

The handful of Elders present were completely shaken. After exchanging glances, they looked around at the former Heavencloud Bazaar. Because of the scale and history of the place, it was a potential goldmine, and whichever clan member was assigned to watch over it would receive untold benefits.

It was at this point that Grand Elder Fang Tongtian spoke up, immediately addressing the most important issue at hand regarding the bazaar. "Hao'er," he said, "who in the clan do you think would be best

suited to running this bazaar?”

His words also indicated to the other Elders that Meng Hao... had the ultimate authority.

Meng Hao looked at the place in which Guru Heavencloud had vanished, then slowly turned around, clasped hands, and bowed to Fang Shoudao and Grand Elder Fang Tongtian.

“Great-Grandpa, Grand Elder, I feel that Fang Xi would be best suited to manage this bazaar,” he said with a smile. “After all, he has had limited chance to gain experience in the clan. This would be an excellent place for him to grow and mature.” Almost as soon as he had decided to rename this place as the Fang Clan Bazaar, he had thought about Fang Xi. Considering how much the place was worth, it would be far better to give it to him than anyone else. 1

“Fang Xi’s a wonderful kid,” Fang Shoudao said with a kind smile. “Let’s give it to him, then.” To him, this place was just a mere bazaar, so he didn’t even consider refusing Meng Hao. That wasn’t even to mention Meng Hao’s status, which caused even his heart to tremble.

However, it seemed that Meng Hao wasn’t interested in publically revealing the matter of his status in the clan. If word spread about that, it would send the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea into an uproar. In fact, it could even influence the balance of power in the entire Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole.

In a similar vein, Fang Shoudao understood a bit about Allheaven Clans, but not too much. He would need to confer with Meng Hao about the subject, and decide on the best way to use it to lead the Fang Clan to prominence as quickly as possible, and become a true Allheaven Clan. When he thought about that matter, it caused Fang Shoudao to treat Meng Hao with even greater regard.

“Hao’er, let’s go,” he said with a laugh. “It’s been a long time since you’ve been back to Planet East Victory. Why don’t you let your Great-Grandpa here test out your cultivation base and battle prowess?”

Meng Hao clasped his hands respectfully, looked at Fang Shoudao and

said, “Let’s not rush back to Planet East Victory, Great-Grandpa. Junior would like to head to Planet South Heaven first, to pay respects to father and mother.”

Fang Shoudao stared in shock for a moment, then looked at Meng Hao thoughtfully. Finally, he smiled and nodded.

“You truly deserve to be called the qilin of the Fang Clan. Not only are you matchless and unrivaled, you’re also a filial son. Your idea is an excellent one. How careless of me! Of course we should go to Planet South Heaven first.

“Your father is the one who raised the qilin son of the Fang Clan, and even agreed to be dispatched to Planet South Heaven to stand guard. His service and contribution to the clan has involved numerous hardships. In fact, the Fang Clan... would be hard-pressed to be able to repay him.

“In fact, I hereby issue new orders. Fang Xiufeng will be the new Clan Chief!! It doesn’t matter that Xiufeng is not on Planet East Victory, all cultivators of the clan should show their respect to him!

“I will personally act as Dharma Protector to help Xiufeng make a cultivation base breakthrough, to step from the Ancient Realm into the Dao Realm!” Fang Shoudao flicked his sleeve to make the order official.

“Tongtian, send orders to the clan. Any clan member who is a stage 5 Immortal or higher will prepare to immediately leave for Planet South Heaven. All Elders will go as well, to bear witness to the bestowing of the gift of Clan Chieftainship!

“All sects and powers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea will know that Fang Xiufeng is the new Clan Chief of the Fang Clan, and demands a show of respect from the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea!”

Fang Shoudao’s proclamation caused rumbling sounds to fill the minds of all members of the Fang Clan. The Elders gasped in shock. For Fang Xiufeng to be named the Clan Chief was a huge matter. After all, even Fang Shoudao was only the acting Clan Chief.

A Clan Chief was the leader of an entire clan. Both in terms of position

and status, it was an exalted rank. In terms of the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole, such a figure was a person of extreme importance.

This act was an extreme show of goodwill on the part of Fang Shoudao toward Meng Hao. It was a way of making up for past issues, and to show how important Meng Hao was now.

In this way, Meng Hao would well and truly be the legitimate Crown Prince!

And that was just the first great gift being given. The second was that Fang Shoudao, with the help of Fang Yanxu, both of whom were powerful Dao Realm experts, would assist Fang Xiufeng to step into the Dao Realm himself!

With their help, and assuming the clan itself did not hold back any expense, it would be possible to significantly reduce the danger he would face when attempting to step into the Dao. If at that point he was still unable to succeed, it would not be the fault of the Fang Clan, but rather, Fang Xiufeng himself.

Regarding how many clans in the Ninth Mountain and Sea could afford to offer such complete support such as this, well, that number could be counted on a single hand!

These two gifts were so incredible that they caused even Meng Hao to gasp in surprise. Then he turned to Fang Shoudao, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

The other direct bloodline Elders were very excited, and also bowed to Fang Shoudao, then turned and flew toward the teleportation portal along with Fang Tongtian.

Before entering the teleportation portal himself, Fang Tongtian turned and gave Meng Hao a deep look. He knew he had made mistakes in the past, and hoped that his current actions would make up for that.

Fang Shoudao laughed and looked over at Meng Hao. "Hao'er," he said, "there's no need to be in a rush. Come come, let's you and I head off first. Once the rest of the clan mobilizes, we can all meet at Planet South

Heaven to pay our respects to the Fang Clan Chief!"

Meng Hao immediately joined Fang Shoudao to enter a teleportation portal, upon which they vanished.

Naturally, Fang Shoudao had many things to discuss privately with Meng Hao, many questions that needed answering.

Despite their departure, the Fang Clan was just as aboil as before. After the clan members returned to Planet East Victory, word rapidly spread, and the entire clan surged into motion.

Although some people questioned the decision, no one dared to violate the orders given by Fang Shoudao. Furthermore, Fang Yanxu emerged from secluded meditation and used his status to oversee the unification of the clan. It didn't take long before the Fang Clan was organized, and over 1,000,000 clan members formed ranks and entered the teleportation portals that led toward Planet South Heaven.

News about the buzz of activity spread off of Planet East Victory and quickly came to be known by all the sects and clans, leading to quite a stir.

Seven days later, the glow of teleportation rose up outside of Planet South Heaven. Numerous shining lights filled the air as the members of the Fang Clan emerged, faces solemn. As they organized themselves in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven, their numbers swelled until it became virtually impossible to see the group from beginning to end.

All of them wore the ceremonial attire of the Fang Clan as they hovered there, facing Planet South Heaven.

Fang Yanxu was at their fore, joined by Pill Elder. Behind them were the Elders, then the direct bloodline clan members. Last were all the other ordinary clan members, arranged in ranks. It was a grand sight that caused the starry sky to tremble and the void to shake.

It was at this time that Meng Hao and Fang Shoudao emerged from the glow of another teleportation portal. Fang Shoudao's expression seemed the same as ever, but his eyes glowed with joy and excitement that were impossible to cover up. Fang Yanxu could see it clearly as Fang Shoudao

approached. When Fang Shoudao saw him, he nodded.

One thing that Fang Yanxu immediately noticed was that Fang Shoudao was actually positioned behind Meng Hao. He was only about half a step back, which might not seem like much, but to Fang Yanxu, it was very telling.

His eyes suddenly gleamed with excitement.

Meng Hao hovered there, backed by what seemed like all of the most powerful experts of the Fang Clan. His heart surged with pride. He... had come home!

*

1. Fang Xi appeared too many times for me to include links. Also of the direct bloodline, he helped Meng Hao with his escapades in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and also had some interaction with the parrot and meat jelly.

Chapter 1166: Dad, Mom, Hao'er Has Come Back!

When Meng Hao left, it was as a Spirit Realm cultivator, taken away by Fang Xi's father. Back then, he was a stranger without any reputation, someone the Fang Clan barely noticed. Neither did the Ninth Mountain and Sea pay him much heed.

At that time, few people cared whether or not he lived or died.

He left quietly, his parents looking on sadly. Upon leaving Planet South Heaven, he had told himself something....

“One day I'll come back, and I'll make dad and mom proud of me!”

Today, he had come back!

His cultivation base was no longer in the Spirit Realm. Instead, it was at the point where he could shake those of the terrifying Quasi-Dao level. Even powerful experts of the Senior generation would have to take him seriously, and treat him as an almighty member of their own generation.

He was no longer a stranger without any reputation. Meng Hao was so famous that his name came up in conversation virtually every day in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. After all, he was also Crown Prince Fang Hao!

Nobody could afford to disregard him, not the Ninth Mountain and Sea, not Paragon Sea Dream, not the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole!

He had come back, not alone, but rather, with a host of Fang Clan experts, all there to pay respects!

Meng Hao hovered in the starry sky, looking in the direction of Planet South Heaven, thinking about many things. Finally, he called out in a loud voice: “Dad, mom, Hao'er has come back!”

As his voice rang out, all of the cultivators in the sects and clans of Planet South Heaven trembled. They could all sense the massive pressure weighing down from the sky, and although they couldn't clearly see what was out there, they felt as if they were suffocating. It was as if countless

beings were up above, emanating pressure, pushing Heaven and Earth to the point of collapse.

In the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands, in a tiny city controlled by the Fang Clan, was a Tower of Tang. That was where Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li often went to look out into the starry sky and observe their children. That was where they had watched Meng Hao rise to prominence on Planet East Victory, something which had filled them with happiness, anticipation... and hope.

“Did you hear that?” Meng Li asked, quivering slightly. She looked at her husband, who looked as somber as ever, and yet at the same time, was radiant with joy.

“I heard,” Fang Xiufeng said, his tone extremely calm as he stood there. “You women are too excitable. You know how worldly-wise I am, so this is nothing new. Isn’t it just a big crowd? Why’d the kid have to make such a big deal over coming home? What a racket!” As he straightened out his clothes, Meng Li glared at him, clearly not very happy with his attitude.

“Oh be quiet,” she said. “Don’t tell me you’re not pleased that your son got your whole clan to come pay respects. Stop pretending you don’t care, you think I don’t know you?” The two of them emerged from their house and flew up into the sky.

“Women,” Fang Xiufeng muttered coolly, ignoring his wife’s words. They had just barely begun to fly up into the air when Fang Xiufeng suddenly blurted, “Wait, is this outfit alright?”

He looked down and straightened out his garments one more time.

“All we’re doing is going to greet some Elders and Patriarchs, right?” Meng Li said, tongue in cheek. “Aren’t you the top Chosen of the last generation in the Fang Clan? Didn’t you just say that you’re worldly-wise? Why are you suddenly so nervous?”

“Who said anything about being nervous?” Fang Xiufeng retorted, coughing dryly. “I’ve been the top fighter for years, I don’t get nervous at anything. I was just thinking that I need to look good for Hao’er’s sake, now that he’s back. The younger I look, the better.”

Meng Li covered her mouth as she laughed. Her laughter made Fang Xiufeng even more embarrassed than before. It was actually just as his wife had said. Although he maintained a calm exterior, inside, he was bubbling with nervousness and excitement.

The Fang Clan was his family, and although he had been willing to be stationed on Planet South Heaven for Meng Hao's sake, he had never forgotten that he was part of them. Not once.

Therefore, to see virtually the entire clan here to pay respects was incredibly moving.

Meng Hao's parents turned into two streaks of light that shot up into the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven, which was the border between it and the rest of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. This was the furthest they could go from the lands of South Heaven. As soon as they arrived, Fang Xiufeng looked at Meng Hao, at the two Patriarchs standing behind him, and all the other countless clan members arrayed further back.

Fang Xiufeng could keep his composure no longer. His face reddened as he clasped hands and made to bow. However, Meng Hao hurried forward and prevented him, then knelt down in front of him.

"Hao'er pays respects to dad and mom!" he said. Even as his voice echoed out loudly, all of the Fang Clan cultivators, including the direct bloodline clan members, all clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"We offer greetings, Clan Chief!!"

As their voices echoed out in all directions, Fang Xiufeng stared in shock and disbelief. He looked at Meng Hao, and then all the familiar faces further off. Finally, his gaze came to rest on Fang Shoudao.

"Patriarch... this...."

"Xiufeng, you are rendering a great service by standing guard here on Planet South Heaven. Furthermore, you have made many other great contributions to the clan. I have already discussed the matter with the leadership in the clan, and from henceforth, you will be the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan!" Fang Shoudao gazed deeply at Fang Xiufeng, his

expression somber as he also clasped hands and bowed.

“Fang Shoudao offers greetings to the Clan Chief!”

“Fang Yanxu offers greetings to to the Clan Chief!” As soon as the two Patriarchs bowed, the direct bloodline clan members immediately lowered their heads and bowed.

“Greetings, Clan Chief!”

“Greetings, Clan Chief!!”

Their voices echoed out like thunder, causing the starry sky to tremble, sending ripples out into the void. The chorus of a million voices could even be heard down on the lands of Planet South Heaven.

Fang Xiufeng was trembling, and Meng Li gaped in shock. Meng Hao finally rose to his feet and walked over to his father and mother. He gazed at his mother for a moment, then gave her a big hug.

“Hao’er, this....” Meng Li was shocked at everything that was happening and looked at Meng Hao questioningly, unable to wrap her mind around what was happening. Previously, both she and her husband had assumed the clan coming to pay respects was a mere formality, an outward display of respect shown as a gift from the clan.

However, despite guessing that there was another reason for the visit, neither of them could ever have imagined that... it was to make Fang Xiufeng the Clan Chief!

“Mom,” Meng Hao said, smiling, “I’m the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. It’s only natural that dad should be the Clan Chief. I wouldn’t accept anyone else but him.” Although his words seemed casual, in truth, they carried a domineering air that only a select few could detect.

Fang Xiufeng’s eyes shone brightly, and he looked at Meng Hao with a somber expression. His lips moved slightly as he quickly transmitted some questions to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao hid nothing. He briefly responded with a description of Allheaven Clans and Dao seeds, after which, Fang Xiufeng trembled.

“So, it’s called a Dao seed....” Fang Xiufeng murmured. He had realized earlier that his energy was noticeably different than before, something he had previously found hard to believe. It had seemed completely outlandish. But now that he knew both the cause and the effect, Fang Xiufeng suddenly realized that it was just as Meng Hao had said; other than himself... Meng Hao would never have approved of anyone else being the Clan Chief.

That was one area that Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu had been worried about.

“Many thanks, Patriarchs Shoudao and Yanxu. Since the clan wishes that I be the Clan Chief, well then... I will do everything in my power to live up to the duty and obligation.” Fang Xiufeng did not refuse. Suddenly, his energy grew more awe-inspiring. His eyes shone like lightning, and as he looked around at all the members of the Fang Clan, his cultivation base erupted with power.

In the blink of an eye, it turned into a tempest which shook the entire starry sky, causing all hearts to tremble. At the same time, Soul Lamps appeared around him, instantly revealing his cultivation base to be at the great circle of the Ancient Realm!

He seemed not a bit less powerful than Guru Heavencloud; he was just a single step away from the Dao Realm. Furthermore, that step could be taken at any time he wished.

However, if he failed, he would end up in the Quasi-Dao Realm. The main reason he wished to avoid such an outcome was not because he feared death. No, he wanted to live as long as possible, so that he could strike fear into the hearts of any enemies of his son and daughter.

As his energy surged out in all directions, the clan members who had previously been hesitant to accept this new development could suddenly sense how powerful Fang Xiufeng was.

Furthermore, Fang Xiufeng was a sword cultivator. Sword cultivators were inherently powerful, so that, coupled with his cultivation base, made it so that at his full power Fang Xiufeng was clearly strong enough to fight

with Quasi-Dao experts!

Even more shocking was that natural laws and Essence also swirled around him. Although it might have seemed like he didn't practice cultivation while on Planet South Heaven, the truth of the matter was that his cultivation had long since ceased to be practiced externally, and was all performed internally. The focus was no longer his fleshly body, but his heart.

Up to this day, he had never revealed the full extent of his shocking power to anyone.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he suddenly waved his finger casually. No one other than Fang Shoudao could detect the meaning of that seemingly random act.

As soon as Meng Hao's finger waved through the air, the Dao seed in Fang Xiufeng suddenly exploded with power. The azure glow which already existed inside of him grew more dazzling, until it was like a beam of azure light shining up into the starry sky.

As soon as that beam of azure light appeared, Fang Xiufeng's energy grew even more powerful. Strange colors flashed, and all of Planet South Heaven rumbled. Shockingly... the power of an Allheaven Immortal was... awakening in Fang Xiufeng!

Because of that, the azure light in him grew even stronger. His cultivation base rotated and his blood surged. At the same time, an Imperial will suddenly flickered in his eyes.

When the members of the Fang Clan saw this, they were completely shocked. As for Fang Shoudao, his eyes gleamed with a strange light, and with excitement.

Apparently because of the power of the bloodline, the initial awakening of the Allheaven Immortal within Fang Xiufeng caused azure light to also shine up brilliantly from all the other members of the Fang Clan.

The starry sky shook, and the lands quaked. It was as if the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea was being shaken. Even the Mountain and Sea Realm

trembled. Apparently... they were all bearing witness to the rise of an Allheaven Clan!

“Greetings, Clan Chief!”

“Greetings, Clan Chief!!” It was hard to say who began crying it out first, but soon the noise of the voices was even louder than before, echoing out like a storm.

Meng Hao, on the other hand, looked exhausted. Although the wave of his finger had seemed simple, it left him feeling drained. However, to see his father looking so powerful, and his mother so excited, made it all worth it.

Meng Hao smiled, a charming, happy smile.

Chapter 1167: Get Back Here, Meng Hao!

Decorative lanterns and brightly colored banners could be seen everywhere on Planet South Heaven. The members of the Fang Clan flew down from the starry sky into various districts of the Great Tang of the Eastern Land, where they used various magical powers to erect huge temple halls and altars.

Over the course of an entire month, they transformed the Great Tang into a palatial temple complex befitting of the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan. They even created numerous Immortal's caves for the insurge of cultivators from off of South Heaven.

The Great Tang of the Eastern Lands was where the grand ceremony to appoint the Clan Chief would be held.

Furthermore, because Fang Xiufeng would stay on Planet South Heaven after his coronation, it became the Fang Clan's second planet. It went without saying that it was now a very important place for the Fang Clan.

Fang Shoudao immediately issued orders that all available clan members participate in the renovation of Planet South Heaven. At the same time, numerous teleportation portals were set up, which connected to the enormous main teleportation portal on Planet East Victory.

You could say that Planet South Heaven was being completely transformed. Not only was the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands mobilized, the other lands were included in the great changes as well, including the Northern Reaches, the Southern Domain and the Western Desert.

Soon, the entire planet was essentially part of the Fang Clan. There wasn't a single person who could disagree with the matter, because... once Fang Xiufeng officially became the Clan Chief, it meant that the Clan Chief was standing guard over Planet South Heaven. That in turn meant that the entire Fang Clan was standing guard over it as well.

Numerous incredible changes began to occur to the four great continents on Planet South Heaven, especially the Southern Domain. Because of Meng Hao's connection to the Southern Domain, it would

eventually become second in importance only to the Eastern Lands, and the cultivators there would be given an enormous amount of special assistance in terms of cultivation and in various other ways. After all, although most sects there had connections to the larger powers out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, in the Southern Domain, Meng Hao occupied the highest position!

To the cultivators of the Southern Domain, Meng Hao was more awe-inspiring than even their own sects!

As for the Blood Demon Sect, that was the place where Meng Hao and Xu Qing had been married. In accord with Meng Hao's wishes, the areas surrounding the Blood Demon Sect had been kept exactly the way they always had.

Beams of colorful light could be seen streaking through the skies of Planet South Heaven constantly as more and more members of the Fang Clan arrived. Their arrival caused the spiritual energy on Planet South Heaven not to lessen, but to grow stronger.

Regarding the Planet South Heaven division of the Ji Clan, they had long since been cowed by Fang Xiufeng. Now, they were forced into an even more subdued position.

As the members of the Fang Clan began fixing up Planet South Heaven, Meng Hao, Fang Shoudao, Fang Yanxu and Fang Xiufeng entered a long session of private talks, during which Meng Hao explained to them everything he knew about Allheaven Clans. That included the source of his own Dao, as well as the effects of the Dao seeds. He explained everything in detail and left nothing out.

Although Fang Shoudao had heard about these things once already, he got excited all the same. As for Fang Yanxu and Fang Xiufeng, both were impassioned by the things they were hearing and coming to understand.

"The Fang Clan is destined to rise to prominence," Fang Xiufeng said. "We won't just lord it over the Ninth Mountain and Sea, we will grow beyond it and become the most powerful clan in the entire Mountain and Sea Realm!!

“For now, all these things about Hao’er must remain top secret. Only members of the Dao Realm are qualified to know the truth!” After reaching a decision on the matter, Fang Xiufeng made the suggestion to have Meng Hao stay put on Planet East Victory.

Meng Hao smiled wryly and tactfully refused. Were it anyone else who had made the suggestion, he would have just ignored it. However, since it was his own father, he could only politely make his case from every possible angle, after which Fang Xiufeng frowned, but agreed.

It took a while, but he finally managed to finish persuading his father and then slip away to find his mother. He quickly brought out all of the things he had bought at the bazaar and handed them over. Meng Li was very pleased. To her, it didn’t matter what Meng Hao bought for her, the expression of the feelings in his heart was the most important thing.

“Oh you!” she said warmly, tousling his hair. “You always throw your money away! You need to learn to be frugal! Don’t you remember what I taught you when you were young about saving money? If you have a single copper coin, cut it in two before you spend it. The same principle applies to spirit stones.

“Furthermore, you’re too kind and considerate. Too honest! You’re a smart kid, but you need to remember what I’ve taught you. Never let yourself get the short end of the stick!

“The cultivation world is a dog-eat-dog place, and you have to be on guard at all times. That’s what I worry about the most, you know. You take after me, too kind-hearted and too honest. Not like your sister. She’s a lot more like your father, always suspicious about everything.” Meng Li shook her head, and her eyes filled with concern.

Meng Hao had a strange expression on his face, and as he listened to her talk, his face started to redden. He had to look at her closely to make sure that she wasn’t being sarcastic with him.

“Mom, I... I never get the short end of the stick,” he explained.

“Never get the short end of the stick?” Meng Li responded lovingly. “Look at all these things you got for me. I can tell from a single glance that

you must have spent a fortune. Obviously you got conned.”

“I didn’t get conned! I...” Meng Hao quickly explained about everything that happened with Guru Heavencloud. Not wanting to get his mother’s hopes up only to dash them later, he left out the part about the jade command medallion. He would wait until he gathered some more clues about the matter before breaking that news to her. After he finished, Meng Li frowned at him, looking even more worried than before.

“Silly boy, why did you go and do things that way?” she said with a sigh. “You shouldn’t have just straight-up killed Guru Heavencloud. You little dummy, that’s exactly what I’m talking about when I say you get the short end of the stick. Everyone has friends and family, including that Guru Heavencloud. Even I’ve heard of him before. He had lots of rich friends. All you had to do was let him go, and he would have gone to get help from his friends. Then you could have followed him to see who his friends were.

“Then you could have robbed all of them without even having to come up with an excuse why. How great would that have been? Ai. You’re just like me, child. Too honest.” His mother finished with a bitter chuckle.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened, and he stared in shock.

“Oh, there’s another reason you shouldn’t have killed him,” she continued. “Do you know how much Quasi-Dao experts are worth? Take him to the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and you could have gotten a mind-boggling price for him. You’re just too inexperienced. Not far-sighted enough. All you could think about was some crappy bazaar. That place isn’t worth squat.

“See, when you analyze it carefully, you’ll see that you really were conned. Don’t you remember what I taught you when you were young? When you go out and see something valuable, if you don’t pick it up, it’s the same as if you lost it!

“Another thing is that the entire body of a Quasi-Dao expert is a magical treasure unto itself. Even if you killed him, you could have delivered his body over to the Fourth Mountain and Sea and earned a huge profit.

“Also, the bones of a Quasi-Dao expert can fetch a high price in the

Seventh Mountain and Sea. After all, those aren't things you run into all the time. But you went and threw all that away! Ai. Honey, you're really too honest and straightforward." By the time Meng Hao's mother finished speaking, her voice was like droning in Meng Hao's ears, and he was staring at her in shock.

After a long moment passed, he suddenly slapped his thigh. Looking extremely annoyed, he said, "You're totally right! Dammit! How come I didn't think of those things!?" Stabs of pain filled his heart as he thought about the vast amount of spirit stones he had lost out on.

Meng Li sighed and tousled his hair, looking just as worried as before.

"You need to think more. If you keep going on the way you are right now, I'll constantly be worried about you being out on your own." Even as she spoke, Meng Hao's face suddenly twitched, and then an unsightly expression could be seen. Meng Li also seemed to notice whatever it was that Meng Hao had, and a smile broke out on her face.

"Your sister's back. Honey, this is the first time you've come back since you left. You need to be more like your sister. She comes back all the time to visit, and she's always asking if you've been by. Oh right, every time she comes to visit, she brings her little hubby with her." Meng Li's eyes suddenly flickered with a crafty gleam. Just as she finished speaking, the front door of the building they were in collapsed inward with a booming crash.

"Meng Hao, you Heaven-damned bastard!! At long last I've managed to track you down!" A young woman flew in through the rubble of the door, looking like an explosive dragon. Her cultivation base was profound; apparently she was a stage 5 Immortal. This was none other than Meng Hao's sister, Fang Yu!

Thanks to Fang Xiufeng's connections to the Emperor Immortal Sect, she had been given a spot there. After joining, she continued to grow and progress. Although she couldn't be considered extraordinary among the members of her generation, she ascribed to the notion that slow and steady wins the race. With every breakthrough she made, her foundation

grew stronger and more stable.

The blow she had just delivered caused the entire building to shake. A look of astonishment appeared on Meng Li's face, and then suddenly she flashed off into the distance.

"You two haven't seen each other for years," she called out. "Why don't you take some time to catch up? Hao'er, your sister had a fiery temper, but you're a big boy, so just grin and bear it, alright!?"

"Grin and bear it, my ass! Get back here Meng Hao!! I promise I won't beat you to death!! I can't believe you foisted that bastard Sun Hai on me to get back at me. Y-y-you.... Am I your sister, or is he your sister!?" Rage burning, Fang Yu roared and shot toward Meng Hao.

"YOU'RE my sister! He's a guy, he couldn't be my sister even if he wanted to!" Meng Hao shot backward immediately. He actually felt a bit guilty, especially when he saw the fawning, servile baldy Sun Hai following close behind Fang Yu. Meng Hao's smile grew even more bitter.

Back when he'd collected some interest from Sun Hai, he had loftily explained to him how to win over a girl that you had a crush on. How could Meng Hao have ever known at the time that the girl Sun Hai was talking about was actually his sister?

After finding out, he'd been planning to teach Sun Hai a lesson or two, but other matters had intervened. By the time he'd returned, Sun Hai had been nowhere to be found, which left Meng Hao with a sinking feeling.

From the way Fang Yu was yelling at him, Meng Hao instantly realized that Sun Hai had sold him out.

"Sun Hai!" he roared. He didn't dare to raise a hand to Fang Yu, but had no such misgivings when it came to Sun Hai. As he closed in, just when he was about to make his move on Sun Hai, Sun Hai suddenly clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Sun Hai offers greetings, Brother-in-law. I will never forget the kindness you showed to me back in the day." With that, Sun Hai pulled out a bag of holding.

“Brother-in-law, these are all the spirit stones I owe you from years ago. I’ve even included the interest, sir. Brother-in-law, please kindly accept my payment.” Sun Hai quickly tossed the bag of holding toward the shocked Meng Hao. This was the first time ever in which someone had proactively paid back the money they owed him. Without even thinking about it, he caught the bag.

Sun Hai immediately retreated to stand in front of Meng Li. With a plop, he dropped to his knees in front of her.

“Sun Hai offers greetings and well wishes, madam,” he said, kowtowing repeatedly. “The trip here was made in haste, but I managed to bring a small gift. Please accept it, madam. I hope it brings you eternal beauty and never-ending youthfulness.” With that, Sun Hai rose to his feet and handed a bag of holding to Meng Li.

Meng Li accepted it, looked it over, and then smiled warmly.

“You always bring me gifts when you come to visit, child. In the future, you don’t need to be so courteous!”

Chapter 1168: Settling Karma with Old Friends

Meng Hao glanced at the bag of holding, and then looked over at the similar bag of holding in his mother's hands. All of a sudden, he realized that Sun Hai wasn't as annoying as he had previously thought.

However, Fang Yu was still cussing him out, causing Meng Hao to tremble in fear. He suddenly shot forward to appear directly in front of Sun Hai.

"Sun Hai, how dare you call me Brother-in-law!" he roared, his eyes flashing. "My sister is as lovely as a flower, tender and refined, unique and incomparable. If you want to fall for her, fine, but without my approval, NOBODY can marry my sister!" His hand shot out like lightning, his index and middle fingers stabbing toward Sun Hai's forehead. Considering the level of Sun Hai's cultivation base, if that blow landed, he would be dead beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Meng Hao attacked with such speed that even his mother was shocked. However, she quickly realized that something else was going on. She understood how her son thought, and knew that Meng Hao wasn't the type to randomly kill people. His finger attack surely had a deeper meaning.

Seeing Meng Hao lunging toward him caused Sun Hai's face to go pale and his mind to spin. He immediately fell back, but considering the difference in level between their cultivation bases, he was like a firefly trying to compare with the shining moon. It was basically impossible for him to evade Meng Hao. At the same time, Fang Yu was closing in on Meng Hao, looking like an explosive dragon.

"Meng Hao, stay your hand!"

"Don't worry, sister," Meng Hao replied, "I'll cut down this pervert for you. From now on, you'll finally have some peace and quiet. This is merely the duty of a younger brother."

Fang Yu suddenly started to get even more anxious. “Meng Hao, you scoundrel, I forbid you from harming him!”

Almost in the same moment that her words rang out, Meng Hao’s fingers touched Sun Hai’s forehead. Sun Hai immediately began to shake. However, it was at this point that he suddenly received a message transmitted by Meng Hao, along with a wink.

“Elder Brother Sun, this is your chance. Go!”

Sun Hai wasn’t a stupid person, so he instantly bit down on his tongue, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. Then he let out a miserable shriek. He suddenly flew backward, intentionally sending his cultivation base into chaos to add to the effect, which caused blood to spurt out from the pores on his skin.

“Sun Hai!” Fang Yu cried, shooting toward Sun Hai and catching him in her arms. Her expression was one of extreme anxiety and guilt.

“I... I can’t hold out much longer,” Sun Hai gasped, trembling. “Before I die... I only have one wish. I–” Fang Yu suddenly frowned, and then a dark expression covered her face.

“Bastard!” she growled through gritted teeth. Then she raised her hand to slap Sun Hai. Sun Hai immediately dodged to the side to avoid the blow; obviously he wasn’t injured at all. Fang Yu was now even angrier than before. She glared at Meng Hao for a moment and then began to chase after Sun Hai.

Seeing that Fang Yu’s anger was no longer fixed on him, Meng Hao sighed in relief. Even if his cultivation base was more powerful than it was, he would never dare to raise his hand to his parents or his sister. Furthermore, he could tell from the way his mother treated Sun Hai that she and his father must approve of their relationship.

Although you couldn’t see it from how she spoke to Sun Hai, Fang Yu clearly liked him, at least mostly. Apparently, all the pain and suffering he had gone through over the past years had finally touched her heart.

Meng Li appeared next to Meng Hao and watched as the enraged Fang

Yu chased Sun Hai off into the distance. Meng Li's eyes shone with warmth and kindness as she said, "Your father and I both approve of them. Sun Hai might not be incredibly exceptional, but he's not bad. Most important is that he truly loves your sister. The past few years, she's constantly bullied him, but he actually seems to like it. He's got a good temperament, that kid.

"Your father and I talked about it, and unless something unexpected happens, they should become official beloved partners in a few years.

"Now that I think about it, Sun Hai is very respectful. He's mentioned over and over again how thankful he is for the support you showed that year." She looked over at Meng Hao and smiled.

Meng Hao actually felt a bit embarrassed. He had been trying to pull a fast one on Sun Hai, and had never imagined that he was actually conning himself at the time. However, now that he thought about it, if Sun Hai and Fang Yu did end up getting married, and it was because of him, then that could be seen as a truly beautiful thing.

"I'm not worried about your sister," Meng Li said, her voice soft. "But you...."

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao took a deep breath and said, "Mom, I'm planning to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea. I'm going to go find Xu Qing... and bring her back."

Meng Li didn't say anything at first. However, after a moment, she nodded.

Burying her worry and anxiety, she said, "Go, as soon as your father's ceremony is over. It's your choice to make, and if you're sure that's what you want to do, then... you need to bring my daughter-in-law back here to meet us."

A sudden breeze blew through the building, causing the leaves to rustle and lifting Meng Li's hair. Meng Hao looked over at his mother and noticed some new wrinkles on her forehead. She was by no means old, but she definitely looked different than he remembered her looking in the past.

Not even cultivators could completely escape the effects of the passing of time.

Meng Hao suddenly reached out and hugged his mother.

“Aw, honey,” she said, smiling warmly, suddenly recalling what Meng Hao used to look like as a child. The two of them chatted until evening fell, whereupon Meng Hao finally took his leave.

“Mom, there’s still some time before dad’s ceremony. I’m going to visit a few places. I’ve been away a long time.”

The evening wind was picking up, and dark clouds were gathering in the sky. As Meng Hao left the courtyard of the Fang Clan, the rumble of thunder could be heard, and great bean-sized raindrops began to pour down.

Meng Hao used no magic to block the rain. Soon, he was soaked through and through, and as he walked down the street, he looked around at the people scurrying about to avoid the rain. He shook his head and smiled. The rain made him think about the State of Zhao, Mount Daqing, and everything that had happened back in those days.

Sighing, he continued along. As he walked, he could sense the boundless Immortal power filling the lands of Planet South Heaven. That came because of all the visiting Fang Clan cultivators, who radiated an intangible energy.

Among all that energy were two auras that shone as prominently bright as lanterns on a dark night. Those two auras belonged to Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu. Planet South Heaven was a unique place that Dao Realm experts could not enter, so they had restricted their cultivation bases to the great circle of the Ancient Realm.

As he sensed all of these things, Meng Hao’s heart gradually grew tranquil. There was a lingering question that his mother had not asked him, and that he himself had not brought up. That was, if he left... when would he return?

He didn’t know. He had absolutely no idea how long it would be from

the time he left the Ninth Mountain and Sea until he would be able to bring Xu Qing back to Planet South Heaven to meet his parents.

“Maybe it will happen quickly. Or maybe... it will take a very, very long time.” Meng Hao had a strange premonition that caused him to brood silently as he walked through the rain. He had lost track of time, and eventually he stopped and looked up, whereupon he noticed a distant wall. A huge gate could be seen in that wall, hanging outside of which was a lantern.

The lantern swung back and forth in the heavy wind, and the heavy, driving rain plopped onto the canvas canopy which covered the lantern, flowing together into a solid stream that then splashed onto the ground.

However, the wick inside was of unconventional design and, although the flame flickered wildly, it didn't fade. It continued to burn, illuminating the character which was written on the canopy. It said... Ji 季.

This was the location of the Ji Clan on Planet South Heaven.

This was the exact place where he had once broken down a gate to collect debts.... 1

He had never imagined that his strolling would subconsciously lead him here.

“I guess it's just destiny,” he thought. “I wonder if my old friends from all those years ago are still here.” He walked up to the door and looked at the iron rings, thinking about how he had ripped the rings off of the doors back then. He chuckled, then reached up and knocked. The sound of the knock echoed out into the courtyard of the Ji Clan.

He only knocked once, then stood there waiting patiently.

Almost immediately, the sound of a commotion could be heard inside the Ji Clan ancestral mansion. Before long, the door slowly swung open, and Meng Hao could see several hundred members of the Ji Clan lined up inside. At their head was the local Ji Clan Patriarch.

He was no longer young like he had been before. He looked much older, and as he stood there looking at Meng Hao, a strange look could be seen

in his eyes. After a long moment, he sighed, clasped hands, and bowed.

“We offer greetings to the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan.”

All of the other Ji Clan cultivators bowed in unison with him. Ji Xiaoxiao was there in the crowd, wearing the clothes of a married woman. She was no longer young and pretty like she had been before. She looked old now, and she also had a conflicted look in her eyes as she looked at Meng Hao.

2

It had been years since their last meeting, and yet, Meng Hao looked as dashing as he always had, or perhaps even more handsome than before. Every move he made caused an indescribable energy to spread out, creating a pressure that weighed down on everyone. It was as if he, standing there outside the door, were the center of the entire world.

And yet, there stood Ji Xiaoxiao, long since married. An inexpressible bitter feeling rose up in her heart, and she bowed her head.

Meng Hao looked around at the various members of the Ji Clan and saw only a few familiar faces. A couple of the people he remembered fighting with in years back, plus there was Ji Xiaoxiao and Ji Tianyi.

Ji Tianyi was now middle-aged, and his cultivation base was in the early Dao Seeking stage. He had since become an elder in the clan. He looked at Meng Hao with a complicated expression.

“Ji Xuelin?” Meng Hao asked.

“He failed in Spirit Severing seven years ago. He’s dead.” The person to answer Meng Hao was Ji Tianyi. 3

Meng Hao stood there silently for a long moment. In the end, he decided that since he had just happened across this place while strolling about, he wouldn’t enter. Looking at the familiar faces one more time, he clasped hands and bowed, then turned to leave.

“Wait a moment!” Ji Xiaoxiao said through clenched teeth. As Meng Hao looked back, she threw a bag of holding over to him, which he caught.

“Those are all the spirit stones I owe you. The debt is clear now.”

“Here’s mine.” Ji Tianyi also threw over a bag of holding.

Meng Hao scanned them, then looked back at Ji Xiaoxiao and Ji Tianyi, and nodded.

“Henceforth, the debt is clear,” he said softly. The Ji Clan paid special attention to Karma. Were his cultivation base lower than theirs, they would be able to take the initiative in manipulating it. But now Meng Hao’s cultivation base had long since reached the level that all they could do was look up at him from far below. They no longer had the initiative when it came to Karma. He did.

If Meng Hao wanted, he could refuse to clear the debt. As his cultivation base grew higher, the Karma would grow even stronger, and the pressure on them greater. However, with the debt clear, they were finally free.

Having settled the Karma, Meng Hao turned and walked off into the distance.

The rain began to fall harder.

*

Note from Deathblade: In this and some subsequent chapters, it clearly indicates that many years have passed since Meng Hao left Planet South Heaven. According to the descriptions, it would have to have been decades. Although no major time skip was described that I can recall, there have been several instances in which we don’t know exactly how much time passed. One example would be when Meng Hao wandered around alone in the Ruins of Immortality.

*

1. Meng Hao came to collect debts from the Ji Clan in chapter 803.
2. Ji Xiaoxiao was the girl he met in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Because of their mutual secrets, she helped him out a bit in the end. Later, he saw her in the Milky Way Sea, but didn’t reveal himself to her. When he came back to collect debts, she wasn’t present.

3. Ji Tianyi was one of the people who ended up owing money to Meng Hao in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. He was never named in that arc itself, but was mentioned by Meng Hao in chapter 803. Ji Xuelin was also mentioned in that same chapter, and you might remember that it was his brother Ji Xueming, who initially tried to stop Meng Hao from taking the door hoops.

Chapter 1169: Returning to the Crow Divinity Tribe!

Meng Hao felt somewhat like a stranger on Planet South Heaven as he looked around at all the familiar sights. In his heart, this was his home, the place where he had grown up, and the place where he learned about cultivation. This was where he had laughed, developed his ideals, and thrived on his youthful energy. This was also the place where he had married Xu Qing.

The rain passed, and a rainbow appeared up above in the dawn sky. Meng Hao went to various places in the vast Eastern Lands. He went to the mountains where lay the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite temple. Long ago, it had been a place of extreme danger to him. Now, nothing there was even worth paying attention to.

He walked through the mountains, through that long, narrow path, and then finally reached the edge of the crater where the temple had once stood. He stood there for a long time, thinking.

He recalled everything that had happened here, how he had taken the bronze lamp, and how everyone had chased him. The events in the subsequent days and nights had been like a sort of baptism.

That was his first time he had truly become embroiled in the affairs of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

As he stood at the edge of the crater, he sighed. Much time had passed. The mountains were still the same mountains, and there was grass everywhere just like before. However, the trees and other vegetation had changed. Although they seemed the same at first, their colors had deepened from the ones that he remembered.

After a long while, he left.

He went to the Northern Reaches, and from there, to the Milky Way Sea. As he passed over the water, he looked down at the waves, and recalled everything that had happened there. He thought about Patriarch Reliance,

the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch, and the Resurrection Lily.

After crossing the Milky Way Sea, he found himself in the Western Desert. It was a vast place, and was still mostly submerged by violet seawater. The Violet Sea was tranquil and lifeless.

He proceeded along over the Violet Sea, eventually reaching the area the Crow Divinity Tribe had once called home. He sank down into the water there and looked at the mountains and valleys in the area, all places with which he was familiar.

From there, he proceeded along under the water, telling himself that he was going to take all of the details about Planet South Heaven and place them in his heart, in order to never forget. As he sped along under the surface of the Violet Sea, he eventually reached the South Cleaving Mountains, which seemed to stretch out endlessly.

Eventually, he reached something that looked like a huge wall, or a city gate. It kept the Violet Sea out of... the Black Lands.

The Black Lands were now very different from how Meng Hao remembered them. They bustled, even thrived. Numerous cultivators scurried back and forth between there and the Southern Domain. Apparently, the Southern Domain was very accepting of the Black Lands cultivators.

Over the years, the former powerful tribes of the Western Desert, as well as the native Black Lands power groups, had all thrived and grown powerful.

Many Northern Reaches cultivators had settled down in the Black Lands, and had come to call the place home. Their path of cultivation had been cut off by Meng Hao years ago. No matter how they cultivated, they could only reach a certain height. Their fates were sealed, and they were forced to atone for the crime committed by their ancestors from the Northern Reaches, when they had invaded the Southern Domain.

The Crow Divinity Tribe was now the largest tribe in the Black Lands and also the number one power, with many other sects and clans subservient to them.

Almost as soon as Meng Hao entered, he realized that there were statues everywhere. Some were large, some were small, but all of the important groups in the Black Lands had them.

Those statues depicted... Meng Hao!

The largest of the statues was covered in spirit stones. When the sunlight fell onto it, it glittered resplendently with a multitude of colors. That statue was located on the highest mountain in the Black Lands, which belonged to the Crow Divinity Tribe.

That statue was the symbol of the Black Lands, and represented the spirit of the cultivators there.

Every so often, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe would gather around the statue to offer worship and sacrifices. As it happened, that was exactly what they were doing when Meng Hao arrived.

He hovered there above the huge statue, looking down at all the Crow Divinity Tribe members gathered around the mountain. There were tens of thousands of them, all prostrating themselves in worship.

No one could sense Meng Hao's presence. It was as if he existed in a different world.

Ten old men in resplendent robes stood apart from the tens of thousands of tribe members, eyes burning with passion. Raising their hands high into the air, they cried out, "Crow Divinity Tribe, bow to the Sacred Ancient!"

In response to their call, tens of thousands of tribe members bowed low and joined their voices together in worship. As the sound echoed out, the tribe members looked at the statue with gazes of awe. From the look of it, if this statue were alive, and gave them orders, they would follow those orders without question.

Meng Hao's statue had replaced totems as the symbol of the cultivators of the Black Lands.

Meng Hao hovered there in midair, looking down at the scene playing out below. He heard the voices of the crowds, and was also just able to

detect that their worship contained vestiges of the power of Joss Flame. It was faint, but it was there.

The ten old men once again cried out with loud voices, “Crow Divinity Tribe, bow to Patriarch Fifth and Patriarch Third!”

Again, the crowds bowed in worship. A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao’s face. He had noticed earlier that this particular statue belonging to the Crow Divinity Tribe had a parrot attached to its shoulder, upon whose ankle was a tiny bell.

The ceremony of offering worship continued.

Meng Hao sighed, and was just about to leave, when all of a sudden, he said, “Eee?”

Eyes glittering brightly, he hovered in place and looked back down below him.

What he saw was that the Joss Flame power which emanated off of everyone because of their fervent worship, was gathering around the statue. It then blasted up into the sky, where a vortex appeared.

Although the cultivators down below couldn’t see that vortex, Meng Hao could see it clearly.

As it spun silently, a figure slowly appeared within it. It was a young man in a black robe, whose appearance... looked very similar... to Meng Hao’s!

The main difference was that he had two black wings sticking out of his back. His expression was lofty as he descended from above to land upon the head of the statue. There, he sat down cross-legged, whereupon he began to breathe in the power of the Joss Flame.

He could not see Meng Hao, but Meng Hao could see him, and knew exactly who he was. This was the creature which had been his follower for a brief period of time, the black bat!

Although he now maintained human form, he still looked the same as before. Clearly, he was here to steal away the Joss Flame sacrifice from the

Black Lands.

Meng Hao glared at the bat creature coldly. At the same time, he realized that the mastiff in his bag of holding had suddenly twitched, and opened its eyes. A blood-colored gleam appeared, as well as an icy-cold aura.

“You’re interested in him, huh?” Meng Hao thought. He then recalled the so-called renegade spirit that the mastiff had absorbed back in the Windswept Realm, which had also been a bat.

The black-winged young man was sitting there in meditation, absorbing the Joss Flame power when, all of a sudden, he shivered. His eyes opened, and he looked around suspiciously. Although he didn’t see anything, he still felt incredibly frightened, as if Meng Hao’s presence caused him to be jumpy.

He suddenly let out a bellow, causing ripples to spread out in all directions. As they neared Meng Hao, he waved his finger, which produced no reaction from the ripples, and in fact, caused them to pass right through him.

The black-robed young man frowned. Despite using a divine ability to check the area, he hadn’t been able to identify anything suspicious. He wanted to just ignore the matter, but the sense of crisis he felt only continued to grow stronger.

He had been absorbing the Joss Flame here for years, and had never felt anything like this before. Finally, he gritted his teeth and flew up into the air to leave. He would rather abandon the Joss Flame than run into any dangerous situations.

However, in the same moment that he flew up, Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed with a bright light, and he snorted.

The sound seemed to reach out past the illusion that masked him, transforming into lightning which crackled in the sky. The world trembled, and the black-robed young man let out a shriek. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he was no longer able to keep himself hidden from the people down below. Almost immediately, everyone caught sight of him

hovering there in the air.

Everyone was shocked, especially the ten old men. Then they saw his face, and their expressions flickered with disbelief.

“Who’s there!!?” cried the black-robed young man, coughing up some more blood. “Who’s ambushing me!!?” He was completely shaken, and yet, all he had heard moments ago was a clap of thunder, not a cold snort from Meng Hao.

If he had heard Meng Hao, then he would never have been able to muster the courage to speak.

“Sacred Ancient!!”

“It’s the exalted Sacred Ancient! Heavens, it’s a manifestation of the Sacred Ancient!!”

“Greetings, exalted Sacred Ancient!!” The tens of thousands of Crow Divinity Tribe cultivators down below were trembling in awe. The ten old men gasped loudly.

“I’m Meng Hao, the Sacred Ancient of this place!” the black-robed young man shouted. “Whoever’s trying to ambush me had better show their damned face right now!” He took a deep breath, sucking in the Joss Flame, causing a bright glow to rise up from him, and making him look every bit like a majestic Immortal.

“Well that’s funny,” Meng Hao said coolly, strolling out into the open air. “If you’re Meng Hao, then... who am I?” Everyone down below could now see him.

The cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribe stared in shock, confusion, and disbelief. They looked at Meng Hao, and then back at the black-robed young man, clearly unsure of who was real and who was not.

Actually, there was no need for them to try to guess. As soon as the black-robed young man caught sight of Meng Hao, his face fell and his eyes went wide. He began to pant with disbelief, and he let out a shout of alarm.

“Meng Hao... you... when did you get back?!” The black-robed young man’s scalp was tingling. He suddenly realized that the thunder from just now had not been thunder at all, but rather, Meng Hao. He began to tremble and back up, and then fled with all the speed he could muster.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he took a step toward the fleeing young man. Then, he vanished, to reappear directly in front of him.

Down below, the tens of thousands of Crow Divinity Tribe cultivators were shaking as they realized that this second Meng Hao was their true Sacred Ancient.

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

“The Crow Divinity Tribe offers greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

As their voices rang out, the entire Black Lands trembled.

Chapter 1170: This Place Is My Home

As the sound echoed out, the Black Lands trembled. In another location in the Crow Divinity Tribe was an enormous altar which was permanently guarded by a massive military force. Other than their Holy Mountain, it was the most sacred place in the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Few people knew the special reason why that altar had been erected. Tribal law in the Crow Divinity Tribe dictated that the successive generations of tribe members were required to offer worship at both the Holy Mountain and that altar.

Next to the altar was a courtyard residence that seemed very ordinary, and not the least bit luxurious. However, in the hearts and minds of the Crow Divinity Tribe, that residence was just as special as the altar and the Holy Mountain.

An old man lived in that courtyard dwelling, a man who was infinitely wise, and was in fact the pillar and strength of the entire Crow Divinity Tribe. With him, the Crow Divinity Tribe occupied the utmost position of authority, and none of the other powers in the Black Lands would ever dare to offend them.

He was the former Tribe Lord of the the Crow Divinity Tribe, and although it had been some time since he had occupied that position, whenever the current Tribe Lord encountered a difficult situation, he would beg an audience with this old man.

In fact, his authority exceeded any Tribe Lord. You could say that he was actually the true power of the Crow Divinity Tribe.

When the sound of the collective voices of the Crow Divinity Tribe echoed out, shaking the Black Lands, that ancient old man was sitting in his room in the courtyard residence, meditating. Suddenly, a tremor ran through him, and he opened his eyes. His eyes were cloudy for a moment, but quickly sharpened, and he took a deep breath. He walked out of his room and into the courtyard, where he looked up towards the figure which was floating in midair above the Holy Mountain.

Simultaneously, the huge altar next to the courtyard began shaking violently, as if something inside was waking up and preparing to emerge.

Up in the air, Meng Hao looked coldly at the black-robed young man, whose face flickered as he tried once again to escape. Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing colors to flash in the sky and a wind to kick up. A power swept over the black-robed young man, a power that he could not fight back against. The power crushed down onto him, and he let out a bloodcurdling scream. Finally, a popping sound could be heard as his body exploded, revealing a struggling black bat.

“You can’t get away,” Meng Hao said coolly, making a grasping motion with his right hand. His fingers seemed to become like five mountains that rumbled through the air toward the bat.

As the bat screeched in terror, red and black light flickered around it, apparently some sort of teleportation power. It shot off rapidly, but no matter how it tried to flee, it always found five enormous pillars closing in on it. Finally, the bat laughed miserably; it had no further means to fight back as the pillars to crush down onto it.

The pillars vanished and turned into Meng Hao’s hand, which was now holding the bat tightly. Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he looked down at the crowds below.

An ancient voice echoed up from the courtyard residence next to the altar, an ancient voice filled with excitement. “Meng Hao, your excellency, is it... is it really you, sir...?”

At the same time, a boom could be heard as the entire altar exploded, revealing a white wolf, which flew into the air. It threw its head back and howled, and when it saw Meng Hao, tears began to stream out of its eyes. It immediately flew toward him, letting out yips of delight.

“Big Hairy....” Meng Hao murmured, looking at the enormous white wolf. Then he looked down at the old man in the courtyard, who was none other than Wu Chen.

“Wu Chen....” he said. An image appeared in his mind of the young man who had followed him through the great migration in the Western Desert.

Now he was an old man. As he thought about all the things that had happened back in those times, his expression softened, and he floated down toward the Crow Divinity Tribe.

“Wu Chen offers greetings, Sacred Ancient!” he said, excitedly dropping to his knees to kowtow. All of the other members of the Crow Divinity Tribe stared blankly at Meng Hao. To them, Meng Hao was no stranger. After all, for their whole lives they had offered worship to his statue.

“Offer greetings to the Sacred Ancient immediately!” Wu Chen roared. Instantly, the rest of the tribe dropped to their knees to kowtow.

The Crow Divinity Tribe was completely shaken, and soon word spread of Meng Hao’s return, and all of the Black Lands were aboil. Numerous elders and Tribe Lords from countless tribes mobilized, traveling to the Crow Divinity Tribe to pay respects.

The Crow Divinity Tribe hosted a huge banquet that lasted for three days. When it came time for Meng Hao to leave, he gave a vast quantity of medicinal pills and magical items to Wu Chen. He wanted to take Big Hairy with him, but after some hesitation, decided against it.

The Crow Divinity Tribe had been worshiping Big Hairy for far too long now, and deep feelings had long since taken root. Big Hairy’s wish was to stay here to guard over them. What Meng Hao did do was help Big Hairy to increase his cultivation base to a higher level, which gave him much more longevity.

Then Meng Hao left the Black Lands to go to the Southern Domain.

Of all the places on Planet South Heaven, the Southern Domain was the place that held the most unforgettable memories for Meng Hao. It was where he had grown up, where he had fought and killed, and the place where he and Xu Qing had become a couple. It was really where... everything had happened.

He had even fought a war for its sake!

The moment Meng Hao left the Black Lands and entered the Southern Domain, memories bubbled up. He saw mountains and rivers that he

remembered from the past, and everything even smelled familiar.

It was the smell of home.

“The Southern Domain....” he murmured softly. Then, he traveled about just like any other cultivator. He went to the Rebirth Cave, the Ancient Temple of Doom, and to many other places where he had once been, including various sects and even the Song Clan.

He went to those places, but only looked around quickly, and did not stay.

Eventually, he went to the former location of the State of Zhao. The huge lake there was now surrounded by countless buildings and structures. This place had become a Holy Land, and was constantly guarded by numerous cultivators. There were even sealing spells in place to prevent people from entering.

Of course, those seals couldn't do anything to prevent Meng Hao from entering. He appeared on the little island in the middle of the lake, where he looked around at the grass and rippling blue lakewater. Images of Xu Qing floated up in his mind as he thought back to the time they had begun their marriage ceremony on this very island.

Pill Demon had presided over it, and even Chu Yuyan had been in attendance. All of the sects and clans came to offer congratulations, and there were even many rogue cultivators who packed the area. It had been an incredibly noisy and exciting occasion.

Back then, the island had been decorated beautifully with lanterns and banners. The joy and happiness had been palpable....

Meng Hao thought about these things as he strolled around. Memories upon memories flitted up, almost as if... he had traveled through his dreams back to that jubilant day.

“Qing'er....” he murmured, his heart stabbing with pain. His vision swam for a moment, and he suddenly saw a young woman clad in bright red clothing. She stood there in front of him, looking a bit shy, but with eyes that shone like sparkling autumn rainwater. She was looking into his eyes,

her gaze soft.

Meng Hao smiled back at her, and then continued to stroll around the island. Every place he went on the island was familiar, and reminded him of the home he and Xu Qing had originally planned to make here.

Time passed, and soon it was evening. The setting sun reflected on the lakewater, creating a scene of dazzling beauty that turned the island golden. Meng Hao stood on the shore, looking at the water, his expression somewhat melancholy.

All of a sudden, he heard a voice from behind him.

“Excuse me! What sect are you from? What are you doing here?” The voice sounded surprised, and also suspicious. Meng Hao turned to find himself looking at three cultivators approaching him.

Two were men and one was a woman, and Meng Hao had seen them earlier as they went about their work of maintaining and tidying the island. Considering the pious expressions on their faces, he had chosen not to disturb them, and had made his way about the island alone.

“This is a Holy Land!” the young woman said, doing nothing to mask the harshness of her tone. “You’re not allowed to be here without permission! If you’re trespassing, you’ll be severely punished. Take out your identity medallion immediately!” As she spoke, the two men fanned out to surround Meng Hao, their eyes glinting sharply.

Suddenly, the setting sun illuminated his face, and one of the men suddenly stared in surprise. He had the feeling that he had seen Meng Hao somewhere before, but wasn’t sure where. The other two had similar reactions. However, it was at this point that Meng Hao shook his head and said, “I don’t have an identity medallion.”

The three cultivator’s faces instantly darkened.

“What gall!” the woman said. “This is the Sacred Ancient’s former residence! Every cultivator in the entire Southern Domain knows that it’s forbidden to step even half a pace onto this island. You think this is just some random place? Sneaking in here is sacrilege!!” Incensed, the woman

performed an incantation gesture with her right hand to unleash a magical technique. Simultaneously, she crushed a jade slip to notify her fellow sect members on the shore of the lake.

“I never took this to be just some random place,” Meng Hao replied softly. “This... is my home.”

“Your home?” said one of the men, laughing coldly, his hand flashing an incantation gesture. “Is that supposed to be a joke? This is the Sacred Ancient’s former residence, it’s....”

Meng Hao wasn’t interested in giving explanations. Shaking his head, eyes still flickering with memories, he sighed and then took a step forward, vanishing into thin air.

Almost in the same moment, three magical techniques shot forward, but hit nothing more than air. The three cultivators looked wide-eyed at the spot in which Meng Hao had vanished, then exchanged shocked glances.

“Did he look familiar to you guys?” the young woman asked.

Almost at the same time, the man standing next to her said, “Did he say this place is his home? But this is the Sacred Ancient’s former residence! Who does he think he is, the Sacred Ancient himself?” As soon as the words left his mouth, his eyes went wide.

The other man’s face fell, and he gasped with disbelief. Voice hoarse, he said, “Sacred Ancient!! He... he looked exactly the same as the Sacred Ancient!!”

Even as they stood there in shock, dozens of beams of light suddenly shot in their direction. An intimidating old man led them, and as he neared, his eyes flashed with anger.

“Who had the outrageous gall to break into the Sacred Ancient’s former residence!!?”

Chapter 1171: I'm Meng Hao!

The old man immediately waved his hand, and in response, the dozens of people following him split up and began to search the island. He also sent his divine sense out, but came up with nothing. Frowning, he turned to the three cultivators who had sounded the alarm and began to question them.

When they told him that the intruder looked exactly like the Sacred Ancient, the old man's face flickered. Then they recounted how the intruder said this place was his home, he gasped.

It was at this point that a glittering jade slip flew out of his bag of holding. He grabbed it and scanned it with divine sense, whereupon a look of bewilderment appeared on his face. Gritting his teeth, he said, "We found him. He's... in the Sacred Mansion at the center of the island!"

The old man disappeared toward the center of the island in a flash, simultaneously sending orders to his subordinates. Soon, all of the other cultivators who had spread out across the island were heading toward the building in the middle.

The three cultivators followed along nervously. They were anxious, not because someone had come to the island; rather, they were anxious about who that person was!

It didn't take long before the old man arrived at island's center, where he caught sight of the disciple who had just notified him about Meng Hao's location. That disciple was kneeling on the ground in front of the Sacred Mansion, trembling.

The structure itself was actually little more than a log cabin, and didn't look unusual in any way. In fact, many of the cultivators who had come here in pilgrimage throughout the years had often wondered why this seemingly ordinary log cabin was referred to as the Sacred Mansion. 1

Meng Hao was currently standing in the doorway, facing away from everyone on the outside, examining the inside of the cabin. Two statues could be seen inside, sitting there looking at each other.

They were dressed in long red wedding gowns, and they were holding hands and smiling. The statues had been carved with incredible grace and skill, making them look extremely lifelike.

One depicted Meng Hao. The other depicted Xu Qing....

Meng Hao stood there looking at the statues in somewhat of a daze. Memories poured into his mind like floodwaters.

Outside of the Sacred Mansion, the old man looked at Meng Hao and could sense the terrifying, indescribable pressure that existed within him. However, that pressure was not radiating out; if it were, the old man was certain that everything in the surrounding area would be instantly transformed into ash.

He took a deep breath, but didn't dare to say anything. Instead, he stood there respectfully. At this point, it didn't matter who this trespasser was; considering the level of his cultivation base, it would be impossible to do anything to stop him. However, the old man secretly crushed a jade slip, sending a notification to the powerful experts in his sect, telling them to hurry over.

The other disciples who had been searching the island had arrived, and stood nervously outside of the Sacred Mansion, not daring to speak.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao asked, "Who carved these two statues?"

The old man's heart thumped, and without even thinking about it, he replied, "It, it... was carved by all of the members of the Senior generation in the Southern Domain, people who actually knew the Sacred Ancient."

Meng Hao turned and looked at the old man.

"And you people? Are you disciples of the Blood Demon Sect?" he asked.

The old man nodded, and was about to say something else, when he saw Meng Hao's face. He felt as if lightning were crashing around in his mind, and he stood there in a daze. It wasn't just him. All of the other disciples around him were also staring in shock.

Subconsciously, they all looked away from Meng Hao toward the statue behind him.

The two of them looked exactly the same!!

The only difference was that somehow, the person standing in front of them seemed to have an ancientness to him, and wasn't a youth like the person depicted on the statue.

Panting, the old man murmured, "Sir... are you...."

"I'm Meng Hao," was the calm reply.

"Sacred Ancient!!"

"I can't believe... it's the Sacred Ancient. How... how could this be possible?!"

In the midst of the exclamations of shock by the old man and his subordinates, an enraged roar echoed out off in the distance. Several hundred beams of light shot through the air, the leader being a middle-aged man. At first his face was twisted with rage, but as soon as he caught sight of Meng Hao, it filled with shock.

"Sacred Ancient!!"

Everyone was in a tumult, so Meng Hao waited in silence for a moment before saying, "I want to spend the night here alone. I would like to thank all of you for keeping this place in order for all these years."

With that, he waved his hand, sending hundreds of bottles of medicinal pills flying out to those present.

Then he turned and walked into the log cabin, slowly closing the door behind him. Soon, lamplight could be seen in the oilpaper windows.

Outside the log cabin was deathly silence. The middle-aged man and the hundreds of other cultivators he had led here could hardly believe what was happening. Exchanging glances, they transmitted messages to each other, not daring to speak out loud. Then they all fell back a short distance and sat down cross-legged, whereupon they began to send messages via jade slip back to Mount Blood Demon. From there, word quickly spread to

the rest of the Southern Domain.

As far as Meng Hao was concerned, this was one of the few occasions since he had left Planet South Heaven in which he had shown so much emotion. It was also one of the few nights he could spend in complete peace and calm. He sat in the log cabin, looking at the statue of Xu Qing, and he soon lost track of time.

In contrast, that night was a sleepless one for the entire Southern Domain. News spread to all the sects and clans that Meng Hao had been seen on the Holy Island. Soon, countless cultivators of the Senior generation, veterans who had fought alongside Meng Hao in the wars of the past, were completely shaken.

It had been years since Meng Hao had left, and although people had seen images of Meng Hao in his various escapades, this was different. The news from the Blood Demon Sect said that this was the real Meng Hao, and that his cultivation base was unfathomably high.

Most importantly, he was on the Holy Island. It didn't matter if it was really him or not, all of the powerful experts of the Southern Domain unhesitatingly made their way there. If it was the real Meng Hao, then they would offer worship to him. If it was not him... then whoever the blasphemer was would face the wrath of the entire Southern Domain.

It was during the great war of the Southern Domain that Meng Hao had truly risen to the level of being a Sacred Ancient. In fact, he was one of three Sacred Ancients, the other two being Pill Demon and Patriarch Song.

They had been the only three peak experts left alive at the end of that war. Later, Pill Demon reached Immortal Ascension and left Planet South Heaven, becoming nothing more than a figure of legend. As for Patriarch Song, he ended the war having been seriously injured, after which he went into secluded meditation and never came out.

Later, Meng Hao also left. However, it was because of how he had sealed the experts of the Northern Reaches into the mountain called Sin of the North that the spiritual energy of the Southern Domain was gradually restored. That mountain still stood, and it was because of it that his name

had reached such heights of glory.

After the war, the Violet Fate Sect and the Song Clan became Holy Lands, and along with the Blood Demon Sect, became the most powerful forces in the Southern Domain. As for the island, because of the wedding which had begun there all those years ago, the Southern Domain cultivators made it their Holy Island, a place to commemorate Meng Hao and Xu Qing.

On this night, all of the sects in the Southern Domain mobilized. The war veterans from the elder generation flew toward the Holy Island, as did people who had been born since then.

Even more surprising... deep in the Song Clan, Patriarch Song, who had been in secluded meditation for years, suddenly opened his ancient eyes. When he heard the reports of what was happening, he sat there silently for a moment, then slowly rose to his feet. Filled with ancientness and exhaustion, he left the Song Clan, taking his fellow clan members with him to the Holy Island.

The emergence of Patriarch Song sent the whole Southern Domain into a huge commotion. Overnight, all cultivators were either thinking about the Holy Island, or talking about it!

Patriarch Song arrived on the island at around midnight, flanked by numerous members of the Song Clan. One of them was a middle-aged woman. She was beautiful, but old, and it was obvious that when she was young, she would have been considered one of the top beauties of the land.

It was none other than Song Jia. 2

Because of what had occurred with Meng Hao, Song Jia had a special position in the Song Clan. She had chosen to never officially take a beloved partner, and had remained single, focused on cultivation.

As soon as the word about Meng Hao began to spread, she also emerged from secluded meditation and calmly joined Patriarch Song to come to the Holy Island.

The arrival of Patriarch Song sent all the cultivators on the island into an uproar. They bowed in respectful greeting, simultaneously clearing a path for Patriarch Song to walk directly up to the log cabin.

Patriarch Song looked at the lamplight flickering in the oilskin windows, and his dim eyes gradually sparkled with bright light. Gradually, he began to emanate a powerful energy like that of an unsheathed magical sword.

The other cultivators in the areas were now staring nervously at Patriarch Song.

“Is it my old pal Meng Hao?!” Patriarch Song suddenly asked, his voice booming like thunder. A huge wind sprang up in the sky, and the land quaked. Massive waves rolled out across the surface of the water.

After a moment, Meng Hao’s voice could be heard from inside the log cabin, sounding somewhat emotional. “Senior Song, please come in.”

The door of the log cabin slowly opened, revealing Meng Hao, looking out at Patriarch Song. His eyes seemed to be filled with memories as he recalled their times fighting together against the invading Northern Reaches army.

The instant Patriarch Song caught sight of Meng Hao, his eyes began to shine brightly. He trembled slightly, then threw his head back and laughed. It was a laughter filled with joy, and the excitement of seeing an old friend.

He walked forward, entering the log cabin, after which the door slowly closed.

“It’s really him....” Song Jia murmured, a complicated look flickering in her eyes.

The night passed slowly. More and more cultivators gathered outside the log cabin. There were cultivators from the Violet Fate Sect and the Blood Demon Sect, as well as others who had fought with him against the Northern Reaches. There were even cultivators gathering on the shores of the lake, packed tightly, their eyes filled with awe and reverence. To them, this was like a holy pilgrimage.

The fact that Patriarch Song had entered the log cabin made it clear to everyone... that this really and truly was the Sacred Ancient Meng Hao!

The news filled everyone with excitement and anticipation. The veteran cultivators who had fought with him recalled their old comrade-in-arms. As for those who had never met Meng Hao before, they merely hoped to catch a glimpse of the majestic Sacred Ancient.

No one spoke. They simply sat there quietly, waiting for the door to open.

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1. Meng Hao built a log cabin in the Blood Demon Sect in chapter 705. Later, when he moved to Blood Prince Gorge, he also lived in a log cabin, presumably a newly constructed one, or the original cabin which had been moved. He spent a lot of time with Xu Qing there, and later, it was where he stayed with her as she neared death. Since this cabin is in a different location, I think it's safe to assume at this point that the original cabin was either moved here, or this one is a replica.
2. Song Jia appeared on several occasions in the story so I'm not going to include links. She became Meng Hao's official fiancée after he won the contest in the Song Clan's search for a son-in-law.

Chapter 1172: A Sermon On The Dao, By The Sacred Ancient!

Gradually, the light of dawn filled the air. The door opened, and Patriarch Song walked out. He looked different than before. He didn't seem like an ancient old man; he was younger, and his eyes flickered with excitement. The injuries he had sustained during the war were now healed, and he looked far more energetic than before.

He subconsciously patted his bag of holding. Inside... was an Immortality Illumination Vine, a gift given to him by Meng Hao which gave him the hope of reaching Immortal Ascension....

A few paces outside of the log cabin, Patriarch Song turned, clasped hands and bowed deeply. Then he looked back up for a moment before leaving. The members of the Song Clan were shocked at the appearance of their Patriarch. They quickly realized that a Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling transformation must have occurred.

Just as the Song Clan cultivators were about to leave with their Patriarch, a beam of light suddenly shot out from the log cabin toward Song Jia.

Meng Hao's voice could then be heard once again. "It's nice to see you, old friend. Please accept this parting gift. Use it to nourish your spirit. It will make cultivation base breakthroughs much smoother."

Song Jia looked at the light floating in front of her. It was an emerald green magical jade which emanated Immortal qi, and was clearly not an ordinary item.

Then she looked back at the log cabin, a complicated expression on her face. Finally, she took the piece of jade and left with the other Song Clan cultivators.

The Song Clan left, but other Southern Domain cultivators continued to arrive. By noon, there was no room left. Crowds of cultivators blotted out the sky and stretched out in all directions.

Meng Hao was done reminiscing. Sighing, he walked out of the log cabin. As soon as he appeared, the surrounding cultivators excitedly clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!” Their voices echoed out in all directions, reaching other cultivators who couldn’t even see Meng Hao, who in turn bowed, and began to cry out the same thing. The sound of all the voices was like thunder booming everywhere.

One by one, the most powerful experts of the various sects stepped forward to offer excited greetings.

“The Sect Leader of the Violet Fate Sect offers greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

“The Sect Leader of the Blood Demon Sect offers greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

Meng Hao looked around at all the cultivators, many of whom he recognized. Smiling, he sat down cross-legged on the stone steps leading up to the log cabin.

“Ladies and gentlemen, Fellow Daoists, welcome to my home. I’m pleased you could come. I haven’t been back for many years, and would like to sincerely thank all of you for your care and concern. You kept this place exactly as I remembered it.

“It is a great kindness shown to me by all cultivators of the Southern Domain. Therefore, I will speak of the Dao here, for seven days. During those seven days, all Southern Domain cultivators are welcome to stay and listen.

“I will explain how my understanding of cultivation has evolved through the various stages, and will explain how I have been enlightened.” With that, he flicked his sleeve, causing the clouds to part, brilliant sunlight to flow down, and an aura of Immortality to spread out. Almost instantly, the entire area seemed like a celestial paradise.

“After careful study,” he began softly, “I have come to find that the Dao

of Heaven and Earth, and one's own Dao, is a willful return to one's natural state....” He had chosen to bestow some good fortune upon the cultivators of the Southern Domain, both as a means of thanking them for caring for his former residence, and also... for the mere fact that he felt this place to be his home. It was different than Planet East Victory. 1

“Therefore, cultivation is also known as ‘cultivating truth.’ Of the two characters which make up the latter term, the first refers to the method, the second refers to the mental state....” His voice seemed to contain a bizarre power that caused it to spread out in all directions, causing every audience member, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, to slip into a strange, trance-like state. 2

“Simply put, it is very similar to how I once described to someone the different Realms of life.

“In the past, various people have asked me what the Dao is.... My responses have varied depending on the occasion, the circumstances, and the level of my cultivation base. In fact, every single time, I gave a different answer. I’m not even sure what my answer will be the next time someone asks me.

“However, there is one thing that will never change, as far as I can tell. And that is... that I don’t know what the Dao is. There are too many answers to the question. All I know... is that what I am pursuing is freedom and independence. To be free and unconstrained. That is my truth, and that is my Dao!

“In cultivating truth, what we cultivate... is the heart.” Meng Hao’s voice reverberated out as he expounded upon his understanding of the Dao, and the enlightenment he had gained regarding cultivation. The words he spoke were like seeds that became buried in the hearts of the various cultivators.

Perhaps most of them would never feel that seed for the rest of their lives. Or perhaps... some would reach a certain point in their cultivation or receive a sudden epiphany which would allow them to acquire the good fortune contained within the seed planted in them by Meng Hao.

You could say that what Meng Hao was giving them... was not just a chance at enlightenment, but also... a path to follow to Immortal Ascension. Given the right chances, it wouldn't be impossible for them to follow a similar path to Meng Hao's, and reach... true Immortality.

But even if they couldn't, they could gain enlightenment from that seed, and break out of the Spirit Realm to become... false Immortals!

Although it could be said that this Immortal seed which Meng Hao was bestowing upon the cultivators of the Southern Domain was not at all like the Dao seed in the blood of his clan, in any case, it was a benevolence on his part. He simply hoped that the cultivators from his home could become more powerful.

"If your heart is steadfast, it cannot be trampled by Heaven or Earth, nor can it be broken by any living thing. You will never bow your head in acquiescence, and you will be able to advance without hesitation, and you will never stop moving forward. This is the meaning of cultivating the heart and cultivating the truth. It is traveling along the path of cultivation itself.

"My life has been spent practicing cultivation. I started in the Qi Condensation stage, and now here I am, having experienced numerous twists and turns. I will merge my body, my mind, and my soul into an image which will become like a spirit in your heart. Observe it. Contemplate it. It can become the truth, the path, and the heart which you cultivate!" Meng Hao's voice seemed profound and ancient. The surrounding cultivators, be they on the island itself or elsewhere in the area, were all shaken and many were instantly enlightened.

Time passed. As Meng Hao sat outside his log cabin speaking of the Dao, more and more Southern Domain cultivators arrived. People even came from the Black Lands. Over the course of the seven days, the island became the complete focus of the entire Southern Domain.

As Meng Hao spoke, it seemed as if every sentence and every word that he uttered originated from nature itself, and contained a great Dao. In fact, there were even some extraordinarily talented listeners who made

immediate breakthroughs.

Because of that, the spiritual energy in the area grew stronger, and more Immortal qi built up. Cultivating in that area for one day was like cultivating for a year elsewhere.

The place now truly deserved to be called... a Holy Land!

By the third day, it wasn't just cultivators who could be seen gathered in the area around the Holy Island. Numerous wild animals appeared. Normally they would be fierce and violent, but right now they were strangely docile. They soon filled the area, and it almost seemed as if they could understand what Meng Hao was saying, and were being enlightened.

Cultivators and wild beasts could both gain Dao enlightenment at the same time; everything was peaceful and calm.

If you looked around, you might see a huge python gaining enlightenment, or an enormous liger prostrating itself in worship. Some of the powerful beasts were rarely seen in the open, but here they were, as if participating in some naturally-occurring rite, gaining enlightenment from Meng Hao's Dao-filled voice.

Birds circled in the sky overhead, and fish leapt out of the water of the lake as they attempted to hear more clearly. Even the grass and vegetation benefited from the Dao, and began to sway gently and emanate spiritual energy.

The Southern Domain was as shaken as if it had experienced a massive earthquake.

As Meng Hao gave his sermon on the Dao, the Fang Clan cultivators buzzed about in preparation for the Clan Chief coronation ceremony. Preparations were completed first in the vast Eastern Lands, where numerous altars and palaces were set up. Teleportation portals were also erected.

The ceremony was set to begin in three months, and invitations were already being sent out through the teleportation portals to the various sects and clans in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The entire Ninth

Mountain and Sea was abuzz with the news about Fang Xiufeng becoming the Clan Chief.

It wasn't just an important matter for the Fang Clan. It was a big event for the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole. The decision of who was to be the Clan Chief could affect everyone. For example, if the Clan Chief was a person fond of fighting and warfare, then it would be possible to predict that war would soon strike the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

If the Clan Chief was weak and docile person, then other inescapable problems could arise.

However... before Fang Xiufeng was sent to stand guard over Planet South Heaven, he was well-known in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He had many friends, as well as many enemies.

Virtually all of the sects and clans had interacted with him in the past, and knew him well. He was known as someone who didn't speak much. However, when he did speak, he always followed through on what he said. He was tough and unyielding, and an old hand when it came to scheming.

He had lots of tricks at his disposal. He fought decisively, and was never sloppy. Back when Meng Hao had been small, certain clan members who coveted his Nirvana Fruit had once looked at him almost as if they wished to eat him. Meng Hao had run to his father in tears to tell him about what had happened.

That night, Fang Xiufeng drew his sword and went on a rampage. That night he killed dozens of subversive clan members, which shocked not only the Fang Clan, but the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole.

From that point on, everyone knew that Fang Xiufeng... was a very protective person, protective to an indescribable degree.

With a personality like that, Fang Xiufeng ended up having many friends, and at the same time... many enemies.

It could well be imagined how busy and exciting it would be on the day of the ceremony, when the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea came to pay their respects. It was even likely that some of his

enemies would come and challenge him to battle, on the pretense of sharing fighting tips.

That was something that was permitted whenever anyone rose to the rank of Clan Chief or Sect Leader. After all, when the ceremony was over, that person could no longer pursue personal matters, but instead, had to be focused on the clan or sect as a whole.

After that day, all grudges would be dissolved.

Of course, it was only a formality. Unless there was some sort of life-and-death enmity, no one would choose to issue a challenge. Anyone who had become a Clan Chief or Sect Leader had to have an incredibly powerful cultivation base, one powerful enough to support everyone around him. Therefore, such customs also served to allow him to demonstrate his battle prowess and strike awe into the hearts of all onlookers.

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1. In Chinese, he literally uses the word “hometown” to refer to the Southern Domain. That word has a slightly different meaning in Chinese than English, and doesn’t necessarily refer to where you grew up, but rather, your ancestral home. For example, even though Baby Deathblade was born in China, his “hometown” would actually be San Diego, since that is where I am from.
2. In ISSTH, Er Gen usually uses the Chinese word 修行 xiūxíng to describe cultivation, although technically speaking this term emphasizes one’s actions. However, there is another word which is often used in xianxia, 修真 xiūzhēn, which essentially means the same thing and emphasizes truth. Both are “real life” words that can be used to describe real Buddhist or Daoist cultivation practices, although the latter is more associated with the xianxia fantasy world.

Chapter 1173: Another Encounter With Shui Dongliu!

The seven days passed by in a flash. After Meng Hao concluded his sermon outside the log cabin on the Holy Island, the surrounding cultivators, beasts, birds, and even the vegetation and fish seemed to be completely absorbed in the process of being enlightened, even though he had already stopped talking.

Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet and looked around at all the beings surrounding him. After a moment of thought, he murmured, "Since we're connected by destiny, I might as well help all of you one more time."

He waved his right hand, causing the Immortal qi and spiritual energy in the area to churn. It then poured into the soil of the Holy Island, nourishing it, bolstering it for all eternity.

Now it was really and truly a Holy Land. For years to come, practicing cultivation for a single day there would be like cultivating for a year elsewhere. Even the land beyond the shores of the lake was affected. The effect wasn't as strong, but it still made the entire area incredibly suitable for cultivation.

When he finished, Meng Hao looked back at the log cabin, then turned and vanished into thin air. The door closed, leaving behind the two statues in their red robes, which would remain sealed there forever, smiling and looking into each other's eyes.

From that day forth, the Holy Island was open for all to visit. However... the log cabin was a place that could not be entered by anyone whose cultivation base was lower than Meng Hao's.

Meng Hao left the island and went to Blood Prince Gorge in the Blood Demon Sect, which was now a restricted area that no one was allowed to enter. If the island was a Holy Land for the Southern Domain, then Blood Prince Gorge was a Holy Land for the Blood Demon Sect.

Patriarch Blood Demon had long since passed away into meditation.

Meng Hao stood outside of his cave, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

He stayed in Blood Prince Gorge for seven days, although no one in the Blood Demon Sect was aware of that fact, ensuring that the seven days passed very quietly.

During that time, he removed the black bat from his bag of holding. He performed a soulsearch, but even with the current level of his cultivation base, he was still unable to uncover any useful information. All he knew was that the black bat was consumed with a powerful desire to possess him.

In addition, he was clearly able to detect the aura... of a renegade spirit. He even called the parrot out to check.

After a bit of curious investigation, the parrot told Meng Hao that the black bat... definitely had the soul of a renegade spirit somewhere in its bloodline. That information confirmed Meng Hao's suspicions that the renegade spirit bat the mastiff had possessed in the Windswept Realm might not have been complete. After a bit of thought, he gave the black bat to the mastiff, who was clearly ravenous.

The mastiff howled and began to absorb it.

Seven days later, Meng Hao left Blood Prince Gorge. He also... imbued the place with Immortal qi, making it a extremely suitable place for cultivation, similar to the Holy Island. He also sealed the log cabin in Blood Prince Gorge.

He wasn't sure when he might be able to return, and deep in his heart, he hoped... that when he returned with Xu Qing, everything would be the way he left it.

After leaving the Blood Demon Sect, he went to the Ancient Temple of Doom, where he waved his hand to create a statue. It was a statue... of the mastiff.

The mastiff was a blood spirit which had originated with the Blood Immortal. If that Blood Immortal were in Meng Hao's presence right now, she wouldn't be a match for him at all. However, Meng Hao felt it was still

appropriate for him to help the mastiff create this statue, as a way of connecting it to its original ancestor.

After seeing the statue of itself, the mastiff looked around at the Ancient Temple of Doom with a complicated expression.

Eventually, Meng Hao left for the Rebirth Cave, taking the mastiff with him.

Throughout the years that Meng Hao had been away from the Rebirth Cave, cultivators continued to travel there to attempt rebirth. Unfortunately, none had succeeded, as was evidenced by the fact that there were more bones there than the last time he had been here. He proceeded in toward the depths of the cave until he found the same wall he had stood in front of the last time he had been here. He studied it, his eyes flickering.

Never for all eternity would he forget the door he had seen in this location last time, just as he had been about to leave. In that moment, it had almost seemed like an illusion which instantly faded away. However, Meng Hao was sure of what he had seen. 1

Because of the level of his cultivation base at that time, he had been unable to get an answer to the puzzle of that door. Now he was back, standing in front of that same wall, his eyes gleaming.

“I wonder if I’ll be able to unearth any more clues, given the current level of my cultivation base...” He unleashed his cultivation base, causing scintillating azure light to shine out. His Allheaven Dao Immortal Realm was more refined than before, and the fusion with his third Nirvana Fruit was now more complete.

As the power of his cultivation base spread out, he waved his finger in the direction of the wall, causing the azure light to spill onto the wall, illuminating it completely.

He stared at the wall as it began to transform. It seemed to wriggle and writhe, and gradually, an archaic and ancient door appeared.

However, the door seemed unstable, as if it were shifting between being

illusory and corporeal. It appeared to be exuding a sinister air, and Meng Hao was even able to detect a bit of wild energy that seemed to seep into him.

It was as if someone were erupting with rage, screaming words that he didn't understand. It sounded like the murmurings of all living things crying out in his ears. With a cold harrumph, he said, "Illusions and lies!"

He reached out and pushed down onto the door, causing a rumbling sound to echo out. However, the door didn't even budge.

He frowned and pushed on the door again more forcefully, but the result was the same.

All of a sudden, an archaic voice spoke from behind him. "You can't open it...."

The voice spoke completely abruptly, and despite the level of Meng Hao's cultivation base, he hadn't been able to detect anyone behind him at all.

He spun around and saw an old man standing there. The old man had the demeanor of a transcendent being, and wore a slight smile on his face as he looked at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gaped in shock; he instantly recognized this old man. It was none other than the man who had once painted him... Shui Dongliu!

"Senior Shui Dongliu!"

"You cannot, and must not, open that door," Shui Dongliu said, looking at Meng Hao, his eyes beaming with admiration.

"What's behind it?" Meng Hao didn't take the time to think about why Shui Dongliu was here. Years ago, he had told Meng Hao that anyone who existed in his memory could not have their Karma severed by the Ji Clan. At that time he had guessed that such an ability revealed how incredibly powerful Shui Dongliu's cultivation base must be.

In fact, Meng Hao could tell that Shui Dongliu... was probably even more powerful than he had imagined, although he had no proof to back up that

feeling other than a hunch.

“It leads to another world,” Shui Dongliu said slowly. “Do you... want to have a look?” He waved his hand, causing a vortex to appear on the door. “Place your hand on the vortex, and you’ll be able to see.”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. After a moment of thought, he extended his hand and placed it onto the vortex. In the instant that he touched it, his vision suddenly swam.

When it became clear, he was looking at a starry sky. It was vast and boundless, and there were no Mountains and Seas, nor were there any planets. There was only a boundless void, within which Meng Hao saw several gargantuan butterflies. The butterflies were so indescribably large that entire worlds existed on their wings!

There weren’t just worlds, there were cultivators!

As the butterflies flew through the starry sky, it was possible to detect lines stretching out behind them, connecting them to an enormous land mass, which they were dragging behind them.

That land mass was shaped like a person!!

The butterflies dragged the landmass through the starry sky, and as they passed through the void, the stars shattered, and the Heavens collapsed!

Meng Hao took a deep breath as the vision of the world faded away, and everything returned to normal. The door on the wall was still there, but the vortex was gone.

“They’re going to be here soon....” Shui Dongliu said, his voice reverberating through the Rebirth Cave.

“They’re coming from outside the 33 Heavens. When they arrive at Planet South Heaven, then South Heaven will be displaced. In that moment... the catastrophe will begin.” Meng Hao turned around again, and Shui Dongliu had vanished without a trace, although the echoes of his voice could still be heard.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment, looking at the door as it

slowly faded away. The wall returned to normal, and Meng Hao stood there, lost in thought.

Meng Hao knew a lot about the history of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and knew that it was facing a grave crisis and catastrophe. He was also aware that... it had something to do with the copper mirror in his bag of holding.

“It’s coming, and there’s no hiding...” he murmured. “However, before it comes, there’s still time to get stronger.” Then he turned his head in the direction of the Ancient Dao Lakes, and his eyes gleamed with anticipation.

Beneath the Dao Lakes was the Divine Flame world, a place he very much looked forward to visiting again. The last time he had been there, he had braved great danger to extract a bit of the Essence of Divine Flame. In fact, that Essence of Divine Flame had become one of his trump cards.

Now, he would go back to visit the Ancient Dao Lakes again, and the Divine Flame world underneath them. This time... he would not only take away a sliver of the Divine Flame, he planned to take away more, whatever he was capable of laying hands on....

To him, it was a location where he could vastly increase his battle prowess.

Meng Hao left the Rebirth Cave, filled with anticipation. He and the mastiff transformed into a beam of light that shot through the air at top speed. The clouds trembled, and colors flashed in the sky, and in the space of a few breaths of time, he had appeared in the air near the Ancient Dao Lakes.

He looked down at all the lakes, and his eyes came to rest on the largest of them. Eyes flickering with an intense, sharp gleam, he shot down from the sky like a meteor, kicking up a huge wind as he shot toward the central lake.

Closer and closer!

1. He saw the door in the wall in chapter 886.

Chapter 1174: Dismemberment by Five Dragons! [1]

The last time Meng Hao had come here, cultivators had been gathering in a search for good fortune. Occasionally, Dao Lakes would erupt. If Dao projections appeared, they offered a chance at enlightenment. Or if the surrounding cultivators were lucky, magical items might shoot out, which would be true good fortune.

Just as at that time, there were cultivators present at the lakes, searching for opportunities for good fortune. It was at this point that Meng Hao shot down from the sky like a meteor.

“What’s... what’s that?”

“A shooting star?”

“No, it’s a person. A cultivator! What’s... what’s he doing?” As people caught sight of what first appeared to be a shooting star, their eyes went wide and their jaws dropped. They had never even heard of someone using such a method to try to reach the central Dao lake.

After all, the pressure that weighed down on the region got more intense the closer one got to the center. Even Dao Seeking cultivators had to be careful. Furthermore, if you attempted to just fly down from up above, the effects would be even more severe; to the people present, it actually seemed like an impossibility.

And yet, that is exactly what they were seeing happen in front of their very eyes, causing everyone to gasp.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Meng Hao shot down like a meteor toward the largest Dao lake, which was in the center of them all. He moved with incredible speed, and nothing could impede his passage. It almost seemed like there was no pressure in the area at all, although the truth of the matter was that the pressure which did exist was completely insignificant as far as he was concerned.

Meng Hao shot into the central lake, and the surface of the water

virtually exploded up into the air. He shot down, and within the blink of an eye, was at the bottom of the lake where he spread his right hand out into a palm and pushed down onto the lake floor.

The sludge at the bottom of the lake writhed, and was then shoved away from Meng Hao's location, revealing a teleportation portal. Meng Hao stood on top of it, then stamped his right foot down, causing the portal to shine with scintillating light that even people beyond the surface of the lake could see.

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao had vanished. When he reappeared, he was in the first level of the world down below, surrounded by mountains of magical items, and countless beasts who were in the process of carrying the treasures toward a huge door that hung in the middle of the air. The door itself was flanked by several huge beasts, which lay there dozing. A moment later though, they trembled as if with excitement, and opened their eyes.

When they saw Meng Hao, several of the beasts roared, but almost immediately, went as quiet as if someone had gripped their throats and covered their mouths. Their eyes went wide, and they didn't dare to make any more noise. They just lay there, staring at Meng Hao in terror and disbelief.

What they saw was azure light radiating off of Meng Hao, a light which next caused all of them to suddenly fly forward and prostrate themselves in front of him.

It wasn't just them. All of the beasts in sight dropped down in worship as soon as they saw Meng Hao. Their eyes shone with fear and shock, and they trembled in place. Meng Hao's aura filled with them with terror, as did the azure light.

Not even Meng Hao had imagined that such a thing would happen. As he glanced around thoughtfully at the Allheaven Dao Immortal light which surrounded him, the beasts joined their voices together and called out, "We offer greetings, Dao Immortal!!"

Eyes glittering, Meng Hao nodded slightly. Without saying a word, he

shot past the prostrating beasts, entering the door and appearing in the second level beyond.

That was the level with a huge altar that resembled a huge mountain. There was also a beast there at the top of the mountain who was enormous, and emanated an ancient aura. After catching sight of Meng Hao, its eyes went wide with disbelief. It examined him for a few seconds, then took a deep breath.

“So, it’s you again. You... have become an Allheaven Dao Immortal!!”

Meng Hao flew up to the top of the mountain and looked around. There was no sign of the Northern Reaches cultivator with whom he had challenged this trial by fire years before.

Seeing Meng Hao look around, the beast said, “He left.”

Then it clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, exalted Dao Immortal!”

“I want to go to the next level!” Meng Hao replied calmly. This time, the beast said nothing to dissuade him. It immediately backed up, leaving the way open for Meng Hao to enter the passageway to the Divine Flame world.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes flashed with determination. He shot forward, vanishing into the world of Divine Flame. The ancient beast remained behind, just as astonished as it had been moments before. When Meng Hao first came here, it could never have imagined that he would end up amazing it so much.

“The first time he came, he could barely get through the second level.

“The second time he came, he was strong enough to take a bit of Divine Flame....

“I never thought that the third time he came, he would do so as an Allheaven Dao Immortal. In fact, his aura leaves me trembling and filled with fear. If he wanted to kill me... all it would take on his part would be a simple thought.” The beast took a deep breath and looked fearfully at the

passageway leading to the Divine Flame world.

When Meng Hao appeared within the world of Divine Flame, he looked around and saw countless enormous pagodas, all of them surrounded by boundless Divine Flame.

In addition to the majestic flames which filled the world, Meng Hao could also see endless piles of bones. The previous times he had been in this place, his cultivation base had been too weak, and he had been in too much of a hurry, therefore, he hadn't been able to examine them closely. But with his current cultivation base, he was not only able to see the bones scattered about below the pagodas, but could also see that the 990,000 pagodas themselves were made of bones.

"My cultivation base this time is much different than last time. I'm curious to find out what exists in this world of Divine Flame. I want to see whether or not anything exists here that I didn't spot last time!" Eyes flickering, he sent his divine sense out to fill this third level, the Divine Flame world. Not only could he see the vivid image of 990,000 pagodas, but, just as before, the enormous city in the middle of them all.

The city was pitch black, but covered with white vines and vegetation. Hovering in the air above it was a flame spark that seemed capable of burning for all eternity, a spark which cast boundless firelight into the world around it.

As Meng Hao's divine sense slowly spread out, he suddenly heard a familiar roar.

"Dao Fang, you must die!!

"You killed me, Dao Fang, and if I'm reincarnated, I'll definitely kill you!!

"The Immortal World is doomed to experience tribulation! The Immortal lands will grow old, and the Immortals will perish. But I refuse to give in!!

"I know the truth! No matter how long you suppress me, I won't admit defeat!

"Damned monkey! If I can get free, I'll have your hide!!

“If I’m transmigrated, I will slaughter myself out of this place! If my transmigration fails, I will fall into oblivion like all other living things, with virtually no hope of reawakening even after countless cycles of reincarnation. Therefore, I will leave a Dharmic decree for this place!

“My decree contains the Essence of my Dao flame, the last vestige of me, Huoyan Zi. I hope that countless years later, that vestige will still exist!” 2

Even with his current cultivation base, hearing the words still left Meng Hao completely shaken. The voice seemed to come from within the spark, a spark which also seemed to contain a vertical pupil inside of it.

The last time he had been here, it had been at this point that his divine sense felt as if it were being burned into ash, and he had been forced to give up. However this time, despite being shaken, he was able to continue to send his divine sense out. It passed the spark, and then proceed further on.

Meng Hao’s face quickly flickered with surprise. On the previous two occasions in which he had come here, his divine sense had told him that this world was a small place. Now, though, as his divine sense spread out, he was shocked to find that this world... was actually far, far larger than he had realized!

There weren’t just 990,000 pagodas!

Or perhaps it was more accurate to say that the 990,000 pagodas were simply one part of the world of Divine Flame. The world itself was divided into six regions!

Meng Hao was currently in the central region, which was surrounded by five other regions. If you looked closely, you would see that the six different regions were all connected. Shockingly, they formed... the shape of a person!!

Each region was filled with innumerable pagodas that almost seemed to weigh down like sealing marks. Most shocking of all was that each of the regions had a black city within it, above which was a burning spark!

Truth be told, that was not what astonished Meng Hao. What left him

flabbergasted was that attached to each of the surrounding five regions was a war chariot. There were five war chariots, each one being pulled by an enormous, red-colored dragon. Those five enormous dragons appeared to be asleep, and as they lay there, they bore the semblance of five mountain ranges.

However, as soon as his divine sense passed over them, the enormous dragons... suddenly shivered, apparently having been stimulated. Simultaneously, an explosive, stifling power erupted out from all of them.

Meng Hao began to pant, and immediately retracted his divine sense. He waited by the exit for a bit, and after seeing that the five dragons apparently hadn't awoken, he finally heaved a sigh of relief.

Those five dragons brimmed with an air of extermination that was even more terrifying than the Dao Realm. Meng Hao could sense that they exceeded even Fang Shoudao's cultivation base.

Suddenly, an image appeared in his head, a vision of five roaring dragons, attached to war chariots. Those chariots were in the process of dismembering a gigantic, almighty figure!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his expression flickered. After standing there silently for a moment, his eyes glittered.

"Whoever Huoyan Zi was, the Essence of Divine Flame has been and will continue to be incredibly useful to me.... Therefore, it doesn't matter how strange things get in here, I'm not going to give up on my idea of acquiring the entire Essence of Divine Flame!" The grandeur of the place filled Meng Hao's heart with vigilance, and its bizarreness weighed down on him like pressure.

When he thought back to what he had accomplished the last time he had been here, he had to admit that ignorance was bliss. Had he known more about the situation, it would have been hard to avoid having misgivings.

1. This is a play on words. The real expression is dismemberment by five horses, a type of punishment in ancient times.
2. The words uttered here are exactly the same as those in chapters 728 and 887. However, in the original chapters, I misinterpreted the name “Huoyan Zi” as something else, so I didn’t translate it as a name back then. This version is correct, and the past versions have been adjusted. Also, don’t forget that Meng Hao “met” Dao Fang in chapter 1114.

Chapter 1175: Channeling the Spark!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked off toward the huge black city covered by white vegetation. Then he looked at the spark hovering above it, and his eyes gleamed with determination.

"No matter what, I'm going to get that spark!" he murmured. That was his goal in coming here; he wouldn't be content with merely replenishing his current Divine Flame. Although there was a lot of the stuff here, the amount he had acquired last time had been limited.

It was a mere strand of Essence. Even if he replenished it, the amount he would end up with in the end would still be limited, just as before. If he wanted more, he would need more of the Essence itself. That Essence... was located deeper in than his current location. It was located where the cities were located, and especially within those flame sparks.

Meng Hao flashed into motion as he headed deeper in. He stopped at the nearest pagoda, where he sat down cross-legged, unleashed the power of his cultivation base, and began to absorb more of the Divine Flame into the Essence which he already had.

Soon, he was completely engulfed in fire. However, the power of his cultivation base was far beyond what it had been last time he had been here. His facial expression didn't even change in the face of the Divine Flame, which he quickly absorbed.

After enough time went by for an incense stick to burn, he rose to his feet and proceeded to the next pagoda. Time passed in this fashion, and as he continuously absorbed more and more Divine Flame, the Essence of Divine Flame inside of him grew larger and more powerful.

So far, he was merely replenishing the Divine Flame, not gaining more overall Essence. It was a process which he couldn't continue indefinitely. However, he wanted to proceed cautiously, and was using this method to get closer to the black-colored city, in order to observe the flame spark which floated above it.

It didn't take long for half a month to go by. Meng Hao had passed

through thousands of pagodas, continuously absorbing flames until his Divine Flame was now ten times larger than it had been when he had entered the place.

He could tell that the next time he unleashed the Essence of Divine Flame, its power would vastly exceed the last time he had done so, to a terrifying degree. Eventually he reached the point where he couldn't absorb any more. Inwardly, he sighed.

He knew that he was at his limit, and if he wanted to break through to a higher level, he couldn't just absorb the Divine Flame in the surroundings. He needed to get in deeper, and absorb the Essence itself.

"Those flame sparks seem strangely dangerous...." he thought as he sat there atop one of the pagodas, gazing at the black city off in the distance. There were still tens of thousands of pagodas in between him and the city. After a bit of thought, he proceeded onward, shooting along with such speed that he left behind afterimages. His determination was such that he ignored any feelings of crisis and charged ahead.

Divine Flame swirled around him, and even the sky was a sea of flames. However, Meng Hao flew through the fire at top speed, kicking up a huge wind as he passed, which in turn set the flames dancing. Soon he had passed more than 5,000 pagodas. Although the temperature of the flames continued to grow hotter, he didn't slow down at all.

8,000. 10,000. 15,000. 20,000. 30,000....

Meng Hao sailed madly through the air, throwing the whole world of Divine Flame into chaos. Flames danced madly, and soon only 10,000 pagodas remained between him and the black city.

By now, the temperature was so high that sweat was dripping down his forehead, and he was panting slightly. Azure light sprang up around him as the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal exploded out. He pressed onward, passing the final 10,000 pagodas to appear directly outside the black city!

Being this close up allowed Meng Hao to clearly sense its might and majesty. When he looked at the white vegetation which covered the walls,

it filled him with a strange and odd sensation.

He took a deep breath, flashing through the air to appear atop the city wall. When he looked down into the city itself, his pupils constricted.

Instead of seeing residential buildings, he saw an enormous, sprawling structure that resembled an Imperial palace.

In the very center of the Imperial palace, in the very center of the city itself, was a collapsed temple. Shockingly, a huge golden throne could be seen in the rubble of that temple, upon which was lying... a pile of human skin!!

The skin was intact, and seemed to have belonged to an ancient old man. Apparently he had been skinned alive, and then that skin had been draped over the throne. It was a bizarre sight, and even more bizarre was that, hovering 3,000 meters directly above the throne, was none other than the flame spark!

Meng Hao's eyes went wide. More vigilant than ever, he sped forward, leaving afterimages behind. In the exact moment in which he left, a hand suddenly reached out of the flames and closed around the afterimage he had left behind, as if it had been attempting to rip his heart out of his body.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent as he looked back at the hand of flame, which instantly began to retract back into the flames. However, Meng Hao stretched out his hand and made a grasping motion.

"Get out here!" he said, snorting coldly. The flames behind the hand suddenly trembled, and a figure was dragged out. It was a body composed entirely of fire, without facial features. Although it was shaped like a person, it was clearly no cultivator.

"Flame spirit!" he thought, eyes narrowing. The flame spirit screamed shrilly, causing the surrounding sea of flames to churn. Suddenly, hundreds upon hundreds of flame spirits appeared, brimming with brutality and rage.

Even the flame up above in the air flickered. The flame spirits then

charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned as the more than one thousand vicious flame spirits closed in on him. He extended his hand with a cold harrumph, performing an incantation gesture and then waving a finger. Immediately, numerous Immortal mountains appeared, shining with azure light as they crushed down toward the flame spirits. Miserable shrieks rang out as virtually all of the flame spirits were crushed. As they were destroyed, they transformed into Divine Flame which scattered about.

Meng Hao didn't pause. He kept flying through the air directly toward the flame spark. As he neared it, he extended his hand and made a snatching motion. Immediately, a roar of rage could be heard from the sea of flames in the area.

"This is the Holy Land of the Five Dragons, and we are following the orders of the exalted Dao Fang, to suppress Huoyan Zi! Regardless of thine identity, begone immediately! Stay, and thou shalt be destroyed in body and soul!"

As the voice echoed out, the sea of flames churned, and a huge flame hand formed, which then shot toward Meng Hao. It looked almost like a hand which would appear in a Tribulation.

It bore down on Meng Hao as if to grab him and crush him out of existence. Meng Hao's eyes flickered with a cold light, and he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, then pointed out. Immediately, rumbling sounds could be heard, and a rift opened up in front of him. Blood Demon hands appeared, which tore the rift open further, allowing the Blood Demon to charge out toward the flame hand with a powerful roar.

A huge boom rang out as the flame hand and the Blood Demon began to fight. At the same time, Meng Hao's right hand flashed like lightning, making contact with the flame spark. In that instant, his mind trembled, and cold laughter rang out from the sea of flames up above.

"Ignorant fool. So-called Immortal. Throughout the years, countless imbeciles like yourself have come from the Immortal World attempting to

acquire the core Daoist teachings and doctrines of Huoyan Zi.

“In the end, none of them ever succeeded. The only thing they acquired was an early death. And now, nobody will be able to save you, either.”

Even as Meng Hao touched the flame spark, something that looked like a vertical pupil opened up within the flame.

It looked at Meng Hao emotionlessly.

“Do you wish to acquire more Essence?

“Do you wish to acquire eternal life?

“Do you wish to have a Daoist magic that can exterminate the Heavens?

“Dao Fang once said that the Immortal World was doomed to experience tribulation. He said that the Immortal lands would grow old, and that the Immortals would perish. Impossible! I refuse to give in! I refuse to admit defeat!

“I can give you my Essence, I can give you my Daoist magic, and I can give you power. However, you must carry out my deepest desire. You must exterminate Dao Fang!!

“Slay Dao Fang!”

Meng Hao’s mind trembled from the sheer madness of the voice. It contained boundless hatred and obsession, and as it filled Meng Hao’s mind, it also seemed to influence the lands of Divine Flame around him. The fire raged higher up into the sky.

At the same time, the flame spark shrank down into his palm, fusing into his body, boring into him, becoming... a part of him!

Apparently, the flame didn’t care whether or not Meng Hao agreed; it fused into him. If it succeeded, then on some level, Huo Yanzi could be considered to have been reincarnated. Even if that reincarnation was merely as one of Meng Hao’s Essences, he would gladly accept that.

If the process failed... then Meng Hao would die. Then the flame would wait for the next Immortal to come and pass on its legacy. Eventually, someone would come who would be the successor of this Essence!

The world of the Divine Flames churned. Shockingly, innumerable flames suddenly began to surge through the air, shooting directly toward... Meng Hao!

If you could look down at the scene from up above, it would be more clear what was happening. The sea of flames was shrinking, with Meng Hao being the center. All the fire was now being sucked into him.

He was on fire, and a roaring bellow echoed out from his lips. Flames erupted out from inside of him and burned out, and he was wracked with indescribable pain. The feeling of imminent death filled him.

He knew that he had two paths stretching out in front of him now. If he succeeded, then he would be able to truly control this Essence, and would be far more powerful than before. If he failed, then he would be transformed into ash!

There was no third option!

The cold voice once again rang out from the sea of flames: "Throughout all the years, no one has ever succeeded. I'm looking forward to seeing you burned alive." Apparently, the owner of that voice had seen many cultivators like Meng Hao die while trying to accept the legacy of this Essence.

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red, and it was impossible to tell what part of that red was blood, and what was flame. His body was withering, his hair burning. Even his bag of holding seemed incapable of standing up to the force, and was starting to crumble. Meng Hao, sensing this, tossed it away from him. Understanding his intention, the mastiff let out an anxious howl and caught the bag.

"Trifling Essence of Divine Flame, you think you can do anything to me?!" Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He could sense the impending crisis, and yet to him, it was nothing compared to what he had experienced in the Windswept Realm!

Chapter 1176: Great Circle: Fleshly body!!

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red, and his clothes were burning away, revealing his powerful body. He was undergoing a baptism of Divine Flame, and was surrounded by an endless sea of fire.

The sea of flames roared toward him, pouring into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. A fierce expression appeared on his face as he rotated his cultivation base, closing off all of his orifices, even the pores on his skin.

"The Divine Flame might be powerful, but it's not invincible. I'll use this flame to refine my body, to take myself to the next level!" He waved both hands, causing his Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps to suddenly appear.

He had nine in total, but only two were currently lit. The other seven were dark.

An Ancient Realm fleshly body like Meng Hao's was a rare thing, and was in fact in the anti-Ancient Realm. His Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps started out dark, and were then lit aflame!

As his fleshly body became more powerful, and as he practiced cultivation, he would light those Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps, one by one!

"Refine!!" he roared, causing the flames to begin to spin around him. They were incapable of entering his body, but instead, began to roast it from the outside.

He trembled, and quickly performed some double-handed incantation gestures. He wasn't using some sort of body-refinement magic, but rather... a pill concocting technique!

Meng Hao's Dao of alchemy was one in which he could use Heaven and Earth as his pill furnace, and his body as the medicinal pill! In that way, pill concocting techniques could be used to refine his body. However, what he was doing in this case, he was not using Heaven and Earth as the pill furnace, but instead... his own body! His body was both the pill furnace

and the medical pill, as he attempted to use the power of the surrounding flames to make himself even stronger!

Shocking rumbling sounds echoed out. Meng Hao's eyes were closed, and his body was bright red as he continuously performed double-handed incantation seals. His hands moved so fast they blurred, casting enchantments not on his surroundings, but on himself.

Even the guardian of the place, who still remained hidden, was shocked. However, he quickly began to laugh coldly.

"No one can succeed. With the curse of the exalted Dao Fang in place, there is no one in the Mountain and Sea Realm who can fuse with the flame spark of the renegade Huoyan Zi!"

Meng Hao's eyes suddenly snapped open, and they shone with bright red light. Staring up into the empty sky, he said, "Say that again after I absorb it!"

Although he couldn't see the person who was speaking, that guardian was as shocked as before at the energy which was rising up from Meng Hao.

He threw his head back and roared as his fleshly body underwent continuous refinement. As the flame sea around him raged, as the Essence battered him... his third Soul Lamp suddenly lit up!

When that happened, rumbling booms echoed out from inside him. His body became mightier than before, his fleshly body power having broken through from the previous level. He was now far stronger than before!!

As his fleshly body grew stronger, he became increasingly capable of withstanding the sea of flames! However, as long as he had the flame spark within him, the surrounding fire would eternally burn him. Either he would be transformed into ashes, or... he would eventually completely absorb the sea of flames.

"Refining my body was the first step. Only by getting my body to the proper level can I successfully absorb the Divine Flame. My body is like a pill furnace; if it takes too much heat, it will explode!" He gritted his teeth,

and his expression twisted. He rotated his cultivation base fully, fighting back against the sea of flames which sought to bore into him, and building up Immortal power within his flesh and blood to once again refine himself!

Booms echoed out as the sea of flames engulfed him. It was almost as if it really wished to melt him into a medicinal pill!

The mastiff howled anxiously, but couldn't get near. Meng Hao had already transmitted strict orders to it that it must not get too close to him.

Meng Hao was rapidly withering, and just when it seemed like he couldn't take it any more, his eyes snapped open yet again. He threw his head back and bellowed as a fourth Soul Lamp flickered to life.

The lighting of that Soul Lamp gave him a bit of breathing room. His body was now almost doubly as powerful as before. His eyes glittered as he performed more double-handed incantation gestures with even greater speed, producing even more sealing marks.

"Bring it on!" he cried, waving both arms, allowing the sea of flames to once again engulf him....

Soon, his fifth Soul Lamp was burning!!

His energy soared to a terrifying degree, and that wasn't because of his cultivation base. Instead... it came from the terrifying qi and blood of his fleshly body!

The power on display caused the hidden guardian's face to fall. Suddenly, he appeared out in the open, a middle-aged man wearing golden armor. He looked like a celestial warrior, and currently, his expression was one of complete astonishment.

He could never have imagined that Meng Hao would actually be able to last this long. In the past, nobody had ever been able to last more than ten or so breaths of time before being killed.

"The flame spark is eternal," the guardian said coldly, looking at Meng Hao as if he were a dead man. "The Divine Flame is boundless. Even if you hold on for longer, all it means is that the pain that you endure will

increase.”

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, Meng Hao’s eyes opened again. He looked through the sea of flames at the guardian and smiled slightly. Because of the pain he was enduring, the smile seemed especially ferocious.

“If I’m not mistaken, you can’t do anything to me while I’m in the middle of absorbing the flame spark,” he said. “In that case... why don’t you just sit back and enjoy the show? Watch... how this flame spark is supposed to be used. Watch... how to absorb all of the flame sea in this place. I’ll suck it all in. After that.... Watch as I cut you down!”

The decisiveness in Meng Hao’s voice caused the guardian’s face to flicker. What Meng Hao had said was correct; he couldn’t interfere with the absorption process. The Divine Flame was in its most wild state, and regardless of what Meng Hao was doing, if he got too close, the flame would go even crazier.

After all, the flame spark contained the will of Huoyan Zi. Normally, that will was kept in a state of suppression. However, when it came time to pass the legacy on to an Immortal, it would erupt wildly.

Indeed, the guardian... didn’t dare to get too close. He could only wait until Meng Hao died amidst accepting the legacy.

His face flickered as rumbling sounds echoed out from Meng Hao, who was now withering even more; his qi and blood having almost completely burned away. However, it was at this point that his sixth Soul Lamp lit up!!

When that happened, Meng Hao began panting raggedly. Adding a sixth Soul Lamp only meant that the time that he could endure the Divine Flame had been extended. However, he was still forced to use it for purposes of exterior refinement; he still didn’t dare to absorb it internally. If the flame raged on both the inside and outside simultaneously in his current state, he would die beyond the shadow of a doubt.

“I need to be stronger. REFINE!!” The speed of his incantation gestures increased. In order to refine his fleshly body to increased heights of power, he even went as far as to stimulate the flame spark inside of him. That in

turn caused the sea of flames around him to grow more intense. Boundless fire raged around him, causing both the mastiff and the guardian to back up.

Meng Hao looked like little more than a sack of bones. However, his eyes shone brightly as his seventh Soul Lamp suddenly lit up.

In the instant that the seventh Soul Lamp came to life, Meng Hao's fleshly body experienced an unprecedented increase in power. The sound of his heartbeat pounded like thunder. He was now several times stronger than before, so much so that if he were to now encounter the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven, a single punch is all it would take to cause him to cough up blood...

His fleshly body was now powerful to an incredible degree, and was continuing to grow even stronger. To Meng Hao, this world of Divine Flame was a location of incredible good fortune when it came to his fleshly body!

Of course, that came with the assumption that Meng Hao would be able to fully absorb the Essence of Divine Flame afterward. If he couldn't... it wouldn't matter how strong his fleshly body got, it would all be in vain!

"I can light another!" he said. He was on the verge of being completely withered up, and was panting. Although his fleshly body was at a state of incredible power, the flame of his life force was weak. The sea of flames continued to refine his fleshly body, and yet it was simultaneously consuming his life force.

The continuous increases in fleshly body power were insufficient to replenish the life force that had been exhausted. Not even the recovery power of his Eternal stratum could match the destruction wreaked by the Essence of Divine Flame. Just as Meng Hao's vision began to swim, he smacked his chest with his hand, stimulating his heart, which surged with power, causing the qi and blood flow within him to speed up. That in turn caused his fleshly body to burst with power.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

In that critical moment, his eighth fleshly body Soul Lamp lit up!!

In that instant, his fleshly body power reaching a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering level. It had achieved the peak of the Ancient Realm, and was just a step away from being equivalent to the great circle of the Ancient Realm.

“Useless,” the guardian said, staring at Meng Hao. “What you’re doing is like drinking poison when you’re thirsty. The sea of flames is boundless, and moments from now, I can watch as you burn away into nothing more than specks of ash.” Although the man was actually inwardly shocked, he still believed that it was impossible for anyone to overcome the curse of the exalted Dao Fang.

Meng Hao looked up through the flames at the man.

“Well then, watch carefully,” he said, voice hoarse. He suddenly caused his cultivation base to cease any sort of resistance against the sea of flames. He opened his pores and orifices, allowing the sea of flames to suddenly wash through him with wild abandon!

Pain filled him, and he trembled violently, gritting his teeth. This type of pain far exceeded the type he had felt during the body refinement. Thankfully, his body was much stronger than before, otherwise, the sudden onslaught would have transformed him into ash within a few breaths of time.

The flame spark inside of him seemed to be calling the Divine Flame, causing it to seethe. Meng Hao was the center of it all, and it was as if the flames had suddenly found the place they had been seeking to go all along.

As they simultaneously poured into him, his cultivation base erupted with the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal. Azure light shone out, and his third Nirvana Fruit was more fully absorbed!

When that happened, he went from being sixty to seventy percent of an Allheaven Dao Immortal to even higher. The sea of flames around him roiled as it poured into his body.

Shockingly, he was now using the flame spark to further refine his third Nirvana Fruit!

First he refined his body, and then he refined his Nirvana Fruit. This was the idea that Meng Hao had come up with, to borrow the power of the Essence of Divine Flame to grow more and more powerful, all for the purpose of fully absorbing the Nirvana Fruit!

“That azure light... it’s....” The middle-aged guardian’s eyes went wide. Although he had seen the same thing earlier, he hadn’t been paying very close attention. Now, the azure light glittered resplendently within the sea of flames, forcing him to pay it full heed. His face fell.

Chapter 1177: True Dao Immortal!

“Allheaven Dao Immortal!!

“Impossible!” the guardian said hoarsely. “How could there still be an Allheaven Dao Immortal in the Mountain and Sea Realm? Impossible!!” He hadn’t paid any attention to Meng Hao’s azure glow before. After all, there were many Daoist magics and defensive magical items that could cast off green or azure glows. It wouldn’t be realistic to think of Allheaven Immortals every time such a light appeared.

From what he could recall, Allheaven Dao Immortals were the stuff of legend, and only almighty figures could be counted among their ranks. As a simple guard that had been conscripted into service here, Allheaven Dao Immortals were the type of existence that was far above and beyond his station.

If Meng Hao weren’t currently engulfed in the sea of flames, shining with an azure light that outshone the Divine Flame, thus provoking a close inspection by the guardian, then he would never have recognized that it was the light of an Allheaven Dao Immortal.

A cold gleam flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes, and rumbling sounds emanated out from his fleshly body. His cultivation base soared, and his Nirvana Fruit fused more fully into him, thanks to the Divine Flame.

Soon, he had reached seventy percent!

Trembling, he threw his head back and roared. The azure light shining off of him grew more scintillating, spreading out in all directions with incredible strength that seemed capable of suppressing the Divine Flame. In fact, the flames shooting toward Meng Hao even paused in place.

However, no matter how powerful that azure light became, the flame spark inside of Meng Hao continued to pull at the Divine Flame, exerting more force, causing it to move once again. All of the flames in the entire world trembled.

Meng Hao shook violently within the sea of flames. He was reaching the

point where he couldn't hold on much longer. His body was beginning to crack, and the Divine Flame was making it difficult to rotate his cultivation base.

Were it not for the presence of the azure light, Meng Hao would already be dead.

"Allheaven Dao!" Meng Hao roared in this critical moment. His third Nirvana Fruit fused even more. More azure light emanated out from him, reaching a distance of thirty meters!

Within that thirty meters, nothing existed but a world of azure light!

By now, his third Nirvana Fruit was eighty percent absorbed!!

Normally speaking, the extra ten percent which had just fused would have taken a month of work. But now, with the burning Divine Flame, the process was completed in a flash. This could be seen as an opportunity for Meng Hao. However, that opportunity was backed by the shadow of death.

With eighty percent of the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, Meng Hao could relax for a moment. His Eternal stratum worked rapidly to heal his life force, and yet even still, he could sense the impending threat of doom from the Divine Flame.

"You're going to die for sure!" said the guardian. "Who cares if you're an Allheaven Dao Immortal? I never imagined that after standing guard here for all these years, I would eventually be able to see an Allheaven Dao Immortal burned alive right in front of me!" The man threw his head back and laughed.

"You're getting excited a bit too early," Meng Hao said in a grating voice. His eyes shone with determination as he extended his right hand and pushed down hard onto his forehead.

Incredible power surged into his mind, and it was almost as if he were attacking his third Nirvana Fruit. His whole body shook, and he coughed up three mouthfuls of blood. Almost instantly, the blood was scorched into a blood mist, and Meng Hao's body withered even more. However, he was able to use the power his strike unleashed to further absorb the

Nirvana Fruit.

Ninety percent!!

Ninety percent of an Allheaven Dao Immortal!

Azure light exploded around him. No longer did it reach out to 30 meters, but rather, 300 meters, an increase of tenfold. At the same time, Meng Hao's life force exploded up, and was significantly restored.

He panted for a moment, then threw his head back and roared, a roar which caused tens of thousands of the surrounding 990,000 pagodas to collapse.

This development caused the guardian's face to fall. He stared at Meng Hao in complete shock, almost unable to believe the things that Meng Hao was doing. All of a sudden, his confidence was beginning to waver, and he had the feeling that perhaps... Meng Hao might succeed after all.

"Impossible," the man murmured, his eyes filling with a staunch gleam. "The exalted Dao Fang has a towering cultivation base. His curse cannot be broken by anyone in the Mountain and Sea Realm! He said that nobody can acquire this legacy, so therefore, nobody can!"

"If the curse of Dao Fang really is impossible to break," Meng Hao said, "well then... what are you guarding, and why does this place even need a guardian!?" He extended his right hand and pushed forward, causing the Divine Flame to seethe and then suddenly stop.

Within the 300 meters of azure light, not a bit of Divine Flame existed. It had all been expelled outside the perimeter, allowing Meng Hao to finally breathe a sigh of relief.

His Eternal stratum surged, restoring his body and replenishing his life force. Combined with the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, it ensured that Meng Hao's energy rose higher and higher. Colors flashed up above, and although there was usually no weather in this place, roiling clouds materialized out of nowhere, writhing in the sky.

An indescribable energy was now rising up from Meng Hao.

It was nothing more than energy, but it caused the guardian's face to fall. He began to pant as he looked at Meng Hao, eyes wide. He could sense the soaring rise in Meng Hao's cultivation base, and it filled him with intense fear.

The combination of explosive growth in fleshly body and cultivation base at the same time caused incredible pressure to radiate out.

Meng Hao raised his hand, and the mastiff also began to emanate an azure light. The azure light obeyed Meng Hao's will, blessing the mastiff, giving it the added protection of an Allheaven Dao Immortal.

The mastiff let out a long howl of joy, then transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao and flew into his bag of holding. Afterward, Meng Hao patted his bag of holding and produced a new set of clothing, which he donned. Then he looked up at the middle-aged guardian.

"It doesn't matter if you're a bit stronger," the man roared, glaring at Meng Hao, "you still can't absorb the entire sea of flames. Even if the flame spark can't kill you, you still won't be able to take it away!"

"You're right, I can't take it away now," Meng Hao said. "But... I will soon. Don't worry, I'll let you watch, and then I'll close your eyes forever!" With that Meng Hao closed his own eyes.

Instantly, an azure magical symbol appeared on his forehead, not the Echelon mark, but rather the symbol of an Allheaven Immortal.

It was circular, and was divided into nine complete sections and one incomplete section. However, that incomplete section was rapidly filling in.

In the space of a few breaths, the final ten percent of the azure magical symbol began to glow with blinding azure light.

The light was now several times more intense than before. It... almost looked like an azure sun.

Meng Hao's cultivation base rocketed up with increasing power. Heaven and Earth trembled, and the entire world shook as ripples spread out in all

directions.

At the same time, the numerous pagodas in the world began to collapse one by one under the increasing pressure of Meng Hao's energy.

Thousands. Tens of thousands. A hundred thousand. Two hundred thousand....

As the pagodas collapsed, the whole world descended into rumbling that sounded like screeching roars that emanated from deep underground. Heaven and Earth shook violently, almost as if doomsday had arrived.

All of that was because of Meng Hao!

All of that was because Meng Hao was... an Allheaven Dao Immortal!

The azure light spread out in all directions, and as it did, the Divine Flame shot back to avoid it. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao was the only person in the entire 3,000-meter area.

Even the guardian was forced to retreat, feeling more astonished than ever.

Meng Hao's body emanated boundless azure light, as if he were an azure-colored sun. His energy rocketed up, his cultivation base exploded, and he felt more powerful than he ever had in his entire life.

If he met a Quasi-Dao Guru Heavencloud in his current state, he was completely confident that he could crush him as easily as dried weeds.

He could even kill... Dao Realm experts, as long as they had 2 Essences or less!

Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and azure lightning shot out of them, smashing through the void and slamming into the middle-aged guardian's eyes. The lightning smashed his mind, crushing him like a wet branch.

He screamed miserably, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he tumbled backward, accompanied by terrifying booms. A single glance forced him backward by seven steps, after which he exploded into bits.

As his Nascent Divinity flew out, it was clear a single thought on Meng Hao's part could cause the surrounding azure lightning to destroy him.

“Like I said, I’m going to let you watch me take away the flame spark,” Meng Hao said coolly, hovering there as if he were the most supreme being in Heaven and Earth.

The guardian’s Nascent Divinity trembled in intense fear of Meng Hao. He still almost couldn’t believe that he... who had guarded this land for so long, who had a cultivation base in the great circle of the Ancient Realm, would actually... have his fleshly body destroyed by a single look from Meng Hao. Even his Nascent Divinity could be killed at any moment.

“Allheaven Dao Immortal... so this... is an Allheaven Dao Immortal!

“Back in the Paragon Immortal Realm, they weren’t Paragons, and yet, even Paragons had to respect them. No wonder they were called the most terrifying slaughter cultivators.... Allheaven Dao Immortals!!”

The man’s Nascent Divinity was trembling as he stared at Meng Hao. His mind spun, and he just couldn’t believe that he had actually seen a legendary Allheaven Dao Immortal. Furthermore... it was not an awakening Allheaven Dao Immortal, but a complete, fully awoken, completely powered up...

Allheaven Dao Immortal!

Chapter 1178: Peak!

The middle-aged guardian was mistaken. He had never seen an Allheaven Dao Immortal, so he didn't know... that even if you said Meng Hao was the first Allheaven Immortal, and that later there might be a second or a third or even more, Meng Hao would still be the most powerful type, an Allheaven Dao Immortal!

Furthermore, he was one of the most powerful Allheaven Dao Immortals in history.

And that was because... of his fleshly body!

The strength of his fleshly body made his Allheaven Dao Immortal battle prowess even more powerful.

"There's no need to rush the absorption of the Divine Flame...." he said softly. "I can still become more powerful!" He could sense that, based on the boundless Immortal power within him, if he wanted to, he could grow to a size of well over 3,000 meters tall.

"My fleshly body... still has an unlit Soul Lamp. I wonder... how powerful I'll be after I light all of them!" A strange light appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as nine Soul Lamps materialized around him. Eight of them were now lit for all eternity, but the ninth was still unlit.

He looked thoughtfully at that ninth Soul Lamp for a moment, then waved his right hand. Instantly, the 3,000-meter azure light vanished. Likewise, the pressure weighing down on the sea of flames vanished, allowing it to rage with fury.

Instantly, the entire area was completely engulfed in fire that obscured all else. The guardian in Nascent Divinity form couldn't even catch a glimpse of Meng Hao.

He remained within the sea of flames, eyes closed, allowing the fire to enter his body. However, he prevented the flame spark from absorbing the flames, and instead allowed them to build up inside of him.

More Divine Flame poured into him, raging, sweeping about inside of

him, pouring through his qi passageways, inundating his internal organs, filling his flesh and blood. It even seeped into his bones.

Meng Hao began trembling slightly, but his expression was the same as usual. Keeping the flame spark sealed, he allowed more and more Divine Flame to build up inside of him, until he was like a being of fire. His flesh, bones, qi passageways, and the other parts of him all contained Divine Flame.

And the amount only continued to increase. If you likened Meng Hao to a bottle, then at the moment, that bottle was now more than forty percent full of Divine Flame.

And he wasn't finished!

Bizarre light gleamed in his eyes as he sucked in the Divine Flame as if he were a black hole. None of it was allowed into the flame spark, but instead, built up inside of him. The sensation of burning increased as the flames did. Meng Hao was using this method... to temper his fleshly body!

BOOM!

Fifty percent. Sixty percent. Seventy percent!

This process of body tempering left him trembling. The difficulty was almost impossible to describe. Were it not for the fact that Meng Hao already had an incredibly powerful fleshly body, plus the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, then he would not have been able to take the intense heat of the flames.

However, in order to strengthen his fleshly body, and in order to take full advantage of this instance of good fortune, he sucked in more. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the boundless Divine Flames coursing through him pushed him from seventy percent to eighty!

The process continued rapidly, until he was at ninety percent!

In that moment, he shook violently and coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Even though he was a creature of flesh and blood, he had absorbed the Divine Flame by ninety percent, causing Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling transformations. He was almost like a flame spirit now, except

with a body of flesh and blood.

“I can keep going. Bring it on!” Meng Hao eyes shone with bright light as he looked at his nine Soul Lamps. A tiny flame had already appeared on the last lamp, and it was growing larger; soon the lamp would be completely lit. Eyes gleaming with determination, he gritted his teeth and sucked in more flame.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, causing everything to shake violently. Pagodas toppled, and the sky appeared to be on the verge of being ripped apart to reveal the lands up above.

After all, this location was underground!

Meng Hao threw his head back and roared as the Divine Flame within him finally reached... one hundred percent!

Each and every part of him was now Divine Flame. At the same time, his ninth Soul Lamp flared to life!!

When that happened, rumbling sounds filled his entire body. His heart began to beat with more power than before, and even his qi and blood caused the outside world to dim. A terrifying power rose up from him, a power that had reached a Heaven-defying level!

You could say that from the beginning of the Mountain and Sea Realm until the modern day, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone with a fleshly body as powerful as this. If he took a single further step forward, he would have a Dao Realm fleshly body!

As for Dao Realm fleshly bodies... there was no need to even mention how rare such a thing was in the Mountain and Sea Realm. Even in the Paragon Immortal Realm, the only people who possessed bodies like that were Paragons!

Only Paragons could take their fleshly bodies into the Dao Realm!

That was because when the fleshly body achieved the Dao, then even if Heaven and Earth rotted away, that fleshly body would not. The only way it could be destroyed was in battle; neither the ravages of time nor the

power of Heaven and Earth could destroy it.

That was the Dao Realm fleshly body!

And right now, Meng Hao was only a step away from exactly that!!

His eyes snapped open, and he threw his head back and roared, causing the land overhead to crumble; dirt and rocks fell down, and although the canopy above didn't collapse, the middle-aged guardian outside of the sea of flames was even more shocked than before.

In response to Meng Hao's roar, the sea of flames around him churned, and hundreds of thousands of pagodas throughout the world toppled over into pieces.

Up in the second level, the ancient beast trembled as the whole level quaked. The first level up above was the same, and even the Dao lakes beyond that were vibrating. Numerous Dao lakes erupted, shooting magical items and Dao projections up into the air, to the shock and delight of the gathered cultivators.

Within the world of Divine Flame, Meng Hao's roars echoed out as his Allheaven Dao Immortal cultivation base exploded with power. There was no azure light though, and he now did nothing to prevent the Divine Flame from pouring into the flame spark.

At long last, the flame spark could absorb the flames it had been blocked off from before. All of the fire outside of Meng Hao surged toward him in waves.

He stretched his arms wide, allowing it to fully flow into the flame spark, which desired to consume all the fire in the world.

"Flame spark... you're mine!" he said, waving his sleeve and rising up into the air. The sea of flames rose up with him, and from a distance, the flames formed an image that looked like a mountain. The sight would be shocking to anyone who could lay eyes on it.

If you looked even closer, it would appear as if Meng Hao had become an invincible bird, with the sea of flames being his wings as he soared through the Heavens, laying waste to everything.

All of the Divine Flame in the world began to converge, shrinking down and pouring into Meng Hao. The flame spark inside of him was shining brightly, and soon, an Essence aura began to emanate off of him.

That essence was no longer just a sliver. It was majestic and boundless, true Essence. Flame Essence. Henceforth, this would be Meng Hao's first Essence.

Meng Hao was the only cultivator ever to be able to control Essence while in the Immortal Realm!

He threw his head back and roared, and the flame sea around him slowly shrank. It was now seventy percent of its original size, then fifty, and then forty!

It was a thoroughly shocking sight. The guardian stared at Meng Hao absorbing the flames, and his previous conviction was now completely shaken.

"The curse of the exalted Dao Fang..." he murmured. "Nobody can acquire the flame spark... how could this be happening...?" By now, the sea of flames was thirty percent of its original size!

The more Meng Hao absorbed, the more resplendent his internal flame spark became. By now, the sea of flames could barely harm him at all, and after he completely absorbed it, fire would never be able to hurt Meng Hao again.

Rumbling filled the entire world. The air shook as the sea of flames once again shrank down!

Twenty percent!!

Only twenty percent of the sea of flames remained. The eternal Divine Flame within the world region was being completely absorbed by Meng Hao. Although this was only a single one of the flame sparks, even someone in the Dao Realm would lust insatiably after it.

Ten percent!!

Brilliant light shone off of Meng Hao, and the flame sea continued to

shrink. The Essence aura on him grew more intense, and everything around him shook violently!

In the space of a few breaths, the sea of flames shrank down into a mere strand of Divine Flame, which then merged into Meng Hao. At that point, this part of the world of Divine Flame didn't contain even a single flame!

As of this day, the sea of flames which had existed for so long, and burned eternally... was now gone. There was no Divine Flame, and the lands below were now completely revealed, and at the same time, all of the pagodas collapsed into rubble.

100,000. 200,000. 300,000... in the blink of an eye, massive rumbling could be heard echoing out until the entire place... didn't have a single pagoda standing in it!

Feeling completely shaken, Meng Hao closed his eyes. The flame spark inside of him had absorbed all of the Divine Flame in the entire world. As of this moment, the will of Huoyan Zi approved of Meng Hao, and did not resist him at all. Instead, it merged into him.

When that happened, the Essence aura within Meng Hao was eternally stabilized!

He slowly opened his eyes. This was his most powerful state. Allheaven Dao Immortal. The great circle of the Ancient Realm fleshly body. A complete Essence of Divine Flame!

"Impossible!!" the guardian shrieked. In the instant that he spoke, the azure lightning which surrounded him transformed into numerous azure snakes that stabbed into his Nascent Divinity. To the man's shock, his Nascent Divinity faded away into the air. Meng Hao had lived up to his word, and allowed the guardian to witness him accepting the legacy of the flame spark!

Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking around until his gaze came to fall on the lands down below. Off in the distance, there were other lands of Divine Flame, and other flame sparks!

However, in the very moment in which he looked off into the distance,

there was something that filled Meng Hao with a sensation of crisis. He spun and looked down at the pitch-black city down below, his eyes shining like blades.

Chapter 1179: The Curse of Dao Fang!

Without the sea of flames covering it, the black city was now much more clearly visible. White vegetation still clung to the walls, and there was still a palace in the middle.

At first, it didn't look much different than the first time he had laid eyes on it.

Meng Hao frowned as he examined it more closely. Then his eyes widened as he realized that something had changed. The pile of human skin which had been draped on the huge throne...

was now gone!

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a cold light, and he sent his divine sense out in all directions, backed by the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal. Soon, his frown deepened as he realized that there weren't any clues to be found about what had happened.

The sense of crisis still existed within him, and was growing stronger. He even had the sensation that someone was watching him.

"The curse of Dao Fang...." He thought back to what the guardian had said before dying. Now that he thought about it, he had met Dao Fang. Although he hadn't seen what he looked like, when he experienced that mental journey out into the void beyond the Windswept Realm, he knew that he had encountered an entity that existed atop the 33 Heavens. That entity's name was... Dao Fang!

Meng Hao didn't have a very high opinion of this Dao Fang. After all, based on his understanding of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the 33 Heavens were the first barrier sealing the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Dao Fang was the second barrier!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he slowly backed up. However, in that moment, the air around him suddenly seemed to be sealed, causing the exit to be completely wiped away.

On the second level of the underground world, the ancient beast gasped.

It suddenly rose to its feet as it realized that the passageway to the third level had collapsed noiselessly.

Meng Hao stopped in place, frowning. The sensation of crisis within him exploded with intensity. His pupils constricted, and he looked down at the black-colored city. This time, he couldn't hold back from gasping.

What he saw was that the color of the city itself was now changing. It was no longer black, but instead, pale white. It almost had the luster of skin. Furthermore, the white vegetation on the city walls was gradually turning brown, almost as if they were blood vessels within the skin.

It wasn't just the city walls that were changing. The whole city, including the palace and all the surrounding buildings, was all changing color to pale white. Then, Meng Hao's eyes widened as the entire city began to move!!

It was slowly twitching; the city walls, the palace, the land, everything was moving. Furthermore, an aura of life suddenly erupted out from the city.

It was as if the entire city was no longer an inanimate object, but a living thing!

As the city spasmed, the city wall emitted rumbling sounds. Odd cracks spread out, and the ground quaked. Shockingly, part of the city wall ripped out and began to rise up, transforming into a huge arm. Another part of the city wall also lurched, and then transformed into a second arm.

The other sections of the city wall rumbled as they transformed into legs. As they rose up from the ground, the palace also jerked as it became a torso, with the central part of the palace turning into an Imperial crown!

As for the enormous throne which was in the palace, it turned into a face!

RUMBLE!!

The entire city transformed in front of Meng Hao's eyes, becoming an enormous giant with white skin, fully 30,000 meters tall, causing everything to shake violently. It actually... didn't even look like a city any

more. It looked like an actual giant!

Its body was made of flesh and blood, and the blood vessels were even visible on its skin. Its eyes glowed with coldness as it stood there looking down at Meng Hao.

When Meng Hao looked up at the face, he realized that this giant was none other than the pile of human skin he had seen earlier!!

The skin hadn't left, but had instead used some special technique to merge with the city and transform into a giant. Or maybe... the city was actually materialized from a giant to begin with!

Perhaps there was another explanation. Maybe the human skin and the city itself were both parts of the curse of Dao Fang!

Meng Hao wasn't sure which of these possibilities was correct. However, he was currently filled with a sense of deadly crisis. He knew that this giant... was a formidable foe!

He suddenly smiled, and his eyes glinted with the desire to do battle. He was now an Allheaven Dao Immortal, with a fleshly body in the great circle of the Ancient Realm, with the true Essence of Divine Flame.

All of that placed Meng Hao at the ultimate peak. He could fight with the Dao Realm, so this trifling giant only made him want to do battle, to test out his new cultivation base breakthrough. He wanted to prove... exactly how powerful he was!

A powerful voice rumbled out of the giant's mouth, crackling like thunder, filled with awe-inspiring power like Heavenly might. The ground trembled, and everything shook. "Hand over the flame spark, and you will merely be killed. Force me to take it, and I'll kill your whole clan!"

Meng Hao looked at the giant, smiled coldly, and then spoke equally domineering words. "Become my follower, and I won't kill you! Refuse, and I'll destroy you in body and soul!"

The giant looked coldly at Meng Hao, then raised his right hand and clenched it into a fist. The air seemed to be on the verge of exploding as incredible power erupted out. He punched toward Meng Hao, and his fist

moved with incredible speed, seemingly encompassing the entire world.

Meng Hao snorted coldly. Instead of backing up, he also clenched his right hand, punching out with the Life-Extermination Fist.

When the two fists slammed into each other, a massive rumbling echoed out. The land between them shattered, and a huge crevice opened up. Meng Hao sailed over it, landing on the giant's hand and racing up toward its neck. Even as he ran, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing numerous Immortal mountains to descend. Then he punched out with the Self-Immolation Fist.

The giant's eyes flickered and it trembled. That trembling caused an explosive force to rage toward Meng Hao. The giant's expression was cold as it reached its left hand up and flicked it in Meng Hao's direction. The massive hand filled the sky; it was almost as if the giant were trying to swat a fly.

"To me, you're nothing more than an insect," the giant said coolly. The palm and fist connected, and the giant's left arm shook. Meng Hao's face paled, and he fell backward several paces. However, the desire to fight burned brightly in his eyes, and he threw his head back and laughed.

"Insect?" he said. Azure light sprang up around him, and the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal erupted. Azure light spread out for 3,000 meters in all directions, and he began to grow taller. In the blink of an eye, he was 3,000 meters tall.

Although he was still miniscule compared to the giant, he was completely different than he had been before. When the giant saw the azure light, his eyes flickered, and he suddenly experienced a feeling of crisis, caused by Meng Hao. Even as his heart trembled, Meng Hao took a step forward. He might be small, but he was as quick as lightning.

He transformed into an azure roc, which was also 3,000 meters long. He stretched his wings out, growing even larger, letting out a fierce cry as he shot toward the giant and slashed at it with razor-sharp claws. The giant roared, performing an incantation gesture which caused booming lightning to surround it.

Each bolt of lightning was like a Heavenly Tribulation. As it bore down, the Essence of Divine Flame shot out of the mouth of the azure roc. This Essence of Divine Flame was far different than what Meng Hao had wielded before. It was the true Essence of Divine Flame, and its sudden appearance caused the giant's face to flicker. He performed an incantation gesture, causing a wild wind to spring up, which transformed into a roaring Wind Dragon.

Even still, it wasn't enough to block Meng Hao and the Essence of Divine Flame which exploded out of the flame spark. A sea of flames surrounded Meng Hao, and then spread out to envelop the giant. It was quickly engulfed in flames, and let out roars of pain. Suddenly, the giant spat out a pearl.

The pearl was black, and emanated an archaic air. Almost as soon as it appeared, it shattered, and its remnants formed into a spell formation.

"Mountain Ghost Seal, Divine Flame Lightning Spirit Hex!!" the giant roared. Meng Hao's Divine Flame surrounded the spell formation, but then stopped, unable to pierce through it.

Meng Hao wasn't surprised by this. It didn't attest to any lack of power on the part of the Divine Flame, but rather, just went to show that as warden of this place, the giant was obviously prepared to deal with the Essence of Divine Flame. Were this any other place in the outside world, and any other opponent, he would be dead.

The azure roc flashed as it transformed back into Meng Hao. He stepped forward with a cold harrumph, performing an incantation gesture which caused the Blood Demon to emerge from its rift. It grabbed the giant's neck, opened its mouth, and took a vicious bite. Meng Hao waved his hand, and the violet moon mark appeared on the giant's head. Then Meng Hao took another step, and his left hand extended with the Supernova Magic.

This time, it didn't need to absorb any light from around it. Meng Hao caused boundless azure light to stream out of his hand, pouring into the Supernova Magic, causing the star to rapidly grow larger and emanate

ripples of destruction as it shot toward the giant.

Huge booms echoed out as the giant was shoved backward, heart trembling. However, Meng Hao didn't stop there. He stepped forward again, taking three steps in a row. His energy began to rise explosively. When you added in the steps from before, shockingly, he had unleashed the Seven God Steps!

As he took his seventh step, his energy skyrocketed. Boundless azure light rose up as he punched out with his right hand. The Life-Extermination Fist, the Self-Immolation Fist, and the God-Slaying Fist, all rumbled through the air.

The three fist strikes, coupled with the Seven God Steps, backed by the peak power of Meng Hao's cultivation base and fleshly body, were enough that... even Dao Realm cultivators with two Essences or fewer would be slaughtered!

Intense pressure caused all light to dim. Heaven and Earth trembled, and the lands cracked. Countless ripples spread out through the air, and Meng Hao shone with azure light so bright that he seemed like an azure sun!

The giant's face fell, and he fought back with all the power he could muster. He roared, shoving both hands down toward the ground. Everything shook, and magical symbols appeared all over the giant. The magical symbols emanated a thoroughly archaic air that exploded out to resist the terrifying power of Meng Hao's Seven God Steps and three fist strikes.

Chapter 1180: Most Powerful State!

The magical symbols on the giant seemed innumerable, but if you looked closely, you would realize that there were actually only nine. However, those nine symbols were constantly splitting apart into multiple overlapping copies of themselves, making it initially seem as if the symbols were without number.

Nonetheless, those nine symbols emanated an incredible aura that provoked shocking transformations in Heaven and Earth. They seemed completely ancient, and as they flickered, they caused nine protective shields to flicker into place around the giant!

The light of the magical symbol shields made the giant even more impressive than before. He pushed his hands down onto the ground, threw his head back and howled. Everything shook violently, and a massive shockwave spread out in all directions

From a distance, it looked like a raging tempest, with nine swirling magical symbols in the middle of it all. Almost instantly, the giant seemed to have entered a state of invincibility.

Meng Hao examined the nine magical symbols with furrowed brow. From those symbols, he could sense... the aura of Dao Fang! Although he had never laid eyes on Dao Fang, he had met him during his mental journey outside of the Windswept Realm and beyond the 33 Heavens. He had even been attacked by him! The feeling he had experienced back then was the exact same feeling he got from these magical symbols!

“The curse of Dao Fang...” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, but he didn’t fall back by even half a step. Instead, he charged forward, punching out with his three fist strikes, unleashing a terrifying power onto the protective shield tempest.

From afar, he looked like an azure sun, the only light in Heaven and Earth. His fist was also azure, and seemingly filled with enough power to annihilate the Heavens and exterminate the Earth.

Rumbling echoed out, and as the fist strikes landed, the giant’s tempest

shield trembled. Massive booms echoed out, and the tempest exploded. In response, the nine magical symbols glittered radiantly, but didn't collapse. Instead, they simply shrank down a bit. Despite that, the giant had been protected, and wasn't injured at all.

Neither was Dao Fang's aura diminished in the least. It roiled out, transforming into a powerful pressure that crushed toward Meng Hao. He was shoved back, staggering backward seven paces before stopping in place. Then he looked up and let out a roar.

That roar caused his Allheaven Dao Immortal cultivation base to surge with power. It also converged the power of his fleshly body, whereupon he shot forward like a lightning bolt. The air vibrated and the wind screamed, all of which was caused by the magical symbols as they were crushed by Meng Hao's charge.

The giant's eyes flickered with killing intent, and he took a step forward, causing the ground to quake. At the same time, he lifted his right hand into the air.

"Exalted Dao Fang!!" he roared. The sound of it caused the nine magical symbols to glitter radiantly as they... converged together!

That convergence caused the aura of Dao Fang to grow even stronger. In the blink of an eye, the nine symbols turned into a suit of armor that covered the giant, making it look like a powerful deity.

It was ferocious armor, green and covered with bristling spikes and images of screaming, suffering faces which were in the midst of devouring each other. It was almost as if thousands of ghosts had been imprisoned inside of it.

On the chest of the armor was a face which looked... almost exactly like... a monkey!!

The monkey's eyes were closed at first, but then they suddenly snapped open. As the monkey stared at Meng Hao, its eyes gleamed with a viciousness that caused Meng Hao's pupils to constrict.

With this armor on, the giant's energy rocketed up, and the power level

of his cultivation base doubled.

Simultaneously, the giant roared, lifting his right hand up and the snatching out viciously. The lands quaked and shook, and numerous crevices opened up below, with the giant at the center. The lands almost looked like they would collapse.

Waves spread out across the ground, causing mountains to rise and valleys to fall, and leaving behind a massive crater. All of this happened in the short space of a few breaths worth of time.

“Return!” That simple word uttered by the giant caused the lands to begin to rise up. Countless motes of dust and ash flew out as something rose up from the ground. It looked almost like a pillar, but in fact...

It was an enormous staff!

The gigantic staff was pitch black, and it was impossible to tell what exactly it was made of. It was 30,000 meters long, a size that any mortal would consider gargantuan, but which was perfectly suited to the giant.

The giant’s hand closed around the pitch-black staff, and then swung it into a fighting position. Rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth, and everything trembled. The giant’s energy once again shot up.

As the giant hefted the enormous staff, his voice rumbled out like thunder. “I shall abide by the decree of the exalted Dao Fang. Immortals are prohibited from taking the flame spark. Any who violate the decree will have their entire clan eradicated!”

Meng Hao, even with his current cultivation base, couldn’t help but be terrified by the power which radiated off of the giant. A sense of deadly crisis filled him, and his eyes began to glow with bright light.

“I already absorbed the flame spark,” he said coolly. “My life... is not something you can just take away. As for eradicating my clan... you’re not qualified to do any such thing.” In Meng Hao’s judgement, the giant was now as powerful as a 3-Essences Dao Lord, or at the very least, the peak of 2-Essences.

He reached down and slapped his bag of holding, then cried out, “Parrot,

meat jelly, get out here!”

Instantly, the parrot and meat jelly shot out in beams of brilliant light. As soon as they appeared and laid eyes on the giant, the meat jelly shrieked, “The aura of Dao Fang!”

Then it tried to fly back into the bag of holding. However, Meng Hao grabbed onto it.

“I’ll give you three bullies,” he said. “Transform into some armor!”

“Four bullies!!” the meat jelly screamed hysterically. “I want four bullies! I just recently learned that four is more than three. Four bullies, and I’ll go all out!” Meng Hao gaped in shock, then nodded.

The meat jelly’s eyes turned red as it began to glow, and then spread out from Meng Hao’s hand to cover his entire body. At the same time, Meng Hao looked at the parrot.

“Battle Weapon!” he roared. The parrot smiled bitterly. Muttering apprehensively, it turned into a beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao. Then the copper mirror flew out of Meng Hao’s bag of holding and merged into the beam of light.

In that instant, Meng Hao’s energy rose to an indescribable degree. A massive windstorm sprung up, within which was the meat jelly as a suit of armor, gray and archaic, emanating a sense of indestructibility.

That suit of armor truly couldn’t be destroyed. As long as the meat jelly lived, the armor would hold. After all, the meat jelly... was fundamentally impossible to destroy, even in armor-form.

With this armor, Meng Hao’s battle prowess shot even higher!

Simultaneously, the parrot and the copper mirror combined on his right arm to form the Battle Weapon!

The Battle Weapon was essentially amorphous, and responded to Meng Hao’s will. Shockingly, it was now an enormous, razor-sharp broadsword, fully 3,000 meters long. It radiated sharpness, and even had pulses of strange light dancing about all over its surface. It sent out terrifying

ripples that seemed qualified to destroy Heaven and Earth, as well as an aura that seemed capable of making all living things wish to prostrate themselves in worship.

This was the Battle Weapon!

Now that Meng Hao was an Allheaven Dao Immortal, his copper mirror exploded with incredible power. Although this was only the initial stage, it was still a complete and terrifying Battle Weapon!

As Meng Hao's cultivation base rocketed up, his appearance now looked even more domineering than the giant's.

"Mastiff!" he said, waving his right sleeve. Instantly, a blood-colored light appeared, flying out and landing on Meng Hao's back. It was a cape, upon which could be seen a totem. That totem... was none other than the mastiff!

As of this moment, in this state, Meng Hao was truly more powerful than he had ever been since he began to practice cultivation.

"Alright," he said, "let's see how many slashes you can take from my Battle Weapon!" His voice was so ice-cold that the land in the area froze over. As he stepped forward, the giant swung its enormous black staff and roared as it charged. If you looked in the giant's eyes however, you would see a very serious look, perhaps even astonishment. It could now sense something different from Meng Hao, an intense... mortal danger!

As they closed in on each other, the Battle Weapon sliced through the air in a radiant beam of light, heading directly toward the pitch-black staff.

When it struck, the staff trembled. It didn't begin to crack. No... it completely collapsed into pieces, having been utterly destroyed.

"Extermination Essence!!" the giant roared, its expression one of intense shock and disbelief. "What magical item is that? How could it possess the legendary power of Extermination Essence?!?! Impossible! This is impossible!!"

Even as the giant shouted out, Meng Hao pressed the offensive, surrounded by scintillating light.

“NO!!” the giant howled miserably. It suddenly slapped both hands down onto its armor, causing the magical symbols to shoot out to defend against the Battle Weapon. When they slammed into each other, the magical symbols began to shatter!

The first, the second, the third... in the blink of an eye, seven of the nine magical symbols were completely destroyed!

Then... the eighth! And finally... the ninth!

When the ninth magical symbol was destroyed, the giant's armor collapsed into fragments.

The scintillating blade then continued on toward the giant's neck!

Chapter 1181: Your Words are Meaningless!

“Exalted Dao Fang, save me!!” the giant roared in terror, its heart pounding as it stared at the descending blade.

In the moment it called out, the ash that was the remnants of the magical symbols suddenly formed back together, turning into the same monkey face which had appeared on the chestplate of the armor earlier. Its eyes shone with a strange light as it stared at Meng Hao. Then it spoke in a sinister voice: “Reincarnation of Heaven and Earth. Heed me, thou shalt slay him not!”

As the voice echoed out, Meng Hao’s Battle Weapon landed on the giant’s neck. What was destroyed was not just the neck, though, but the entire giant. An indescribable force slashed into it, completely crushing and shattering it!

However, in response to the monkey’s voice, the giant suddenly burned with powerful life force, a life force that seemed impossible for Heaven and Earth to destroy!

Rumbling could be heard as it began to recover from its state of destruction. From the look of it, the power of extermination unleashed by Meng Hao and his Battle Weapon were incapable of actually destroying the giant!

As its life force flourished, the giant first gaped in shock, then went wild with joy. Roaring, it lifted both hands into the air and charged toward Meng Hao. As for Meng Hao, he actually completely ignored the giant, and instead turned to the monkey.

Voice cool, he said, “The Mountain and Sea Realm is not your Heaven and not your Earth. You don’t control reincarnation here. Therefore, your words... are meaningless!” As he spoke, his Battle Weapon exploded with intense black light that spread out in all directions. The giant suddenly trembled, and then collapsed into pieces. The fist which had been

descending onto Meng Hao became nothing more than ash.

In the moment that the giant died, the face formed from magical symbols glared at Meng Hao, then began to fade away into the air. Meng Hao staggered backward, and the Battle Weapon vanished. The copper mirror and the parrot appeared again. The parrot looked very listless. After glaring bitterly at Meng Hao for a moment, it returned to his bag of holding.

Meng Hao's armor and cape transformed back into the meat jelly and mastiff. They both looked exhausted, and he quickly put them away. His face was pale white, and he now lacked any energy to keep fighting.

It would have been difficult for him to wield the Battle Weapon with only his own might. Therefore, he'd been forced to share the load with the meat jelly and the mastiff. That was what had enabled him to stay in that most powerful of states for a bit longer.

Thankfully, it hadn't taken too much time to defeat the giant. Even still, Meng Hao was completely worn out.

As the giant died, the magical seals in the area began to fade away, revealing the exit. Meng Hao's face flickered as he considered whether or not to go to the other lands in the area to acquire their flame sparks. But then, the ground suddenly began to quake. The other five lands that existed in the Divine Flame world then began to rise up into the air.

As the lands shook, mighty roars echoed out from them. Meng Hao immediately sent his divine sense sweeping out, and caught sight of five churning columns of black smoke.

The black smoke rose into the air, rapidly forming together into an enormous head. That head... had the face of a monkey.

Meng Hao's face flickered as a sensation of deadly crisis filled him that was far, far greater than anything he had experienced earlier. As it exploded out in his mind, he instantly abandoned any thoughts of trying to go to the other lands. His body flashed as he unleashed his cultivation base, transforming into an azure roc that shot toward the exit.

He performed a quick teleportation and instantly appeared by the exit. However, before he could step through, the monkey formed from black smoke suddenly howled.

That howl immediately caused the air to shatter. It filled the six lands of the Divine Flame world, echoing out, causing everything to shake. An indescribable power of destruction filled that roar, and it caused blood to spurt out of Meng Hao's mouth.

Shockingly, the exit itself also began to rumble and collapse. At the same time, the monkey face opened its mouth and lunged toward Meng Hao.

The sensation of deadly crisis grew even greater, and Meng Hao coughed up another mouthful of blood, then stepped into the collapsing exit.

However, in the instant before it completely collapsed, a fierce gleam flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. He was not the type of person who liked to come out on the losing end, and would always seize every opportunity that came his way. Although he was in a moment of extreme danger, he lifted his right hand and then waved his finger toward the monkey face up above him!

"A Writ of Karma! You owe me money!" he roared. Then, he vanished.

In the moment that he disappeared, the exit shattered, consumed by the enormous mouth formed by the giant land masses.

In the air above the world of Divine Flame, the monkey face suddenly trembled. Karma Threads appeared, which gradually formed together, forming a connection to Meng Hao. This was a special type of Karma, and once formed, if Meng Hao wasn't repaid sufficiently, it could turn into an inner Devil.

"You damned bastard!! How could you have a magical technique like this!? You Immortals are all completely shameless!!" The face roared, and everything collapsed. Wild colors flashed about as the special Karma Thread Meng Hao had tied was forcibly severed. Of course, that severing caused a huge backlash which also affected Meng Hao.

Meng Hao appeared on the second level, coughing up a mouthful of

blood. Before the first mouthful finished spurting out, he coughed up a second and then a third mouthful of pitch-black blood!

After that, he swayed dizzily, and instantly knew that someone had broken A Writ of Karma. He had predicted that such a thing might happen, and was also aware that a backlash would occur. However, that didn't cause him to even pause to think about whether or not to use the technique. That was Meng Hao. If he was willing to treat himself viciously, then how much more so could he treat others viciously!?

He was willing to suffer a backlash, as long as it meant that the monkey did too!

That was his way of telling people: Don't provoke me!!

The ancient beast on the second level looked at Meng Hao with a strange expression. It saw the entrance to the third level collapse, and apparently wanted to ask about what had happened. However, it hesitated. Based on everything, it could guess that some monumental event had occurred. However, sometimes, not knowing what had happened was far safer than knowing.

Therefore, it maintained its silence and chose not to ask any questions.

Meng Hao looked at the beast and nodded. Then he shot out from the second level's exit, and left the underground world entirely.

Although this adventure had ended with Meng Hao being injured, he had also acquired much. His only regret was that of the six flame sparks, he had only acquired one.

"Well, there's no hurry," he thought. "One of these days, I'll come back. And then... I'll make sure that A Writ of Karma gets fully formed!" Meng Hao had already come to the rough conclusion that the monkey face was likely... Dao Fang!

Huoyan Zi had mentioned Dao Fang, who was also the same person standing guard outside of the 33 Heavens!

"If I can fully solidify A Writ of Karma, then I'll hardly be able to wait until I leave the Mountain and Sea Realm and charge through all the 33

Heavens. When I see Dao Fang's true self, I wonder if he'll pay the money back first, or just attack me?" Meng Hao chuckled coldly as his body flickered, then reappeared in the plains that surrounded the Ancient Dao Lakes of the Southern Domain.

As soon as he materialized, Meng Hao took a deep breath, causing the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth to roil toward him. He absorbed the spiritual energy and then breathed out again, completing a full cycle. His Eternal stratum was hard at work, and he also produced medicinal pills, which he immediately consumed.

As his wounds rapidly healed, he sat down cross-legged and began to meditate. The area he was in was wild and rugged, filled with wild vegetation and lacking the slightest sign of human habitation.

After sitting there for about two hours, his wounds were healed by about ninety percent. The worst injuries had been sustained, not during his battle with the giant, but in those final moments, by the roar of the monkey face.

That roar had injured his soul, and had even affected the flame spark. Thankfully, Meng Hao had been able to escape almost immediately, ensuring that the injuries weren't permanent. Otherwise, there would have been serious and troubling repercussions.

He was about to continue the healing process when he realized that the final ten percent would require several hours. At that point, he suddenly opened his eyes and slapped his bag of holding. A jade slip flew out, and when he pressed down onto it, Fang Shoudao's voice filled his mind.

"It's time for you to return and help the two of us stand as Dharma Protectors for your father to step into the Dao!"

Meng Hao's face lit up. His injuries weren't that important. What was truly important was helping his father step into the Dao. Both to him and to the clan, that was a matter of utmost importance!

That was especially so after witnessing Guru Heavencloud's failure in attempting to step into the Dao. Meng Hao was worried for his father, but he also knew that Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu were offering an

incredible gift. Plus, his father was already in the great circle of the Ancient Realm. This step... was a step that had to be taken!

Meng Hao rose to his feet and transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the Eastern Lands. He was almost done with the things he needed to take care of on Planet South Heaven. Once his father's ceremony was complete, it would be time to leave!

"Dao Realm cultivators aren't allowed to enter Planet South Heaven.... Well then, what will Patriarch Shoudao do to allow father to step into the Dao here?" Feeling very curious about the matter, Meng Hao shot out of the Southern Domain at top speed, all the way to the Eastern Lands. It only took him the time it takes half an incense stick to burn before he was back in the Fang Clan citadel.

As soon as he got close, Fang Shoudao's voice boomed out from inside. "Hao'er, we've been waiting for you! Let's go!" Even as he spoke, he flew out of the ancestral mansion along with Fang Yanxu. Last to come out was Meng Hao's father, Fang Xiufeng.

Fang Xiufeng looked over benevolently at Meng Hao, unable to conceal his excitement at attempting to transcend the tribulation of stepping into the Dao. Although he brimmed with anticipation, he was also very nervous.

Chapter 1182: Great Tang; Allheaven!

“Dad...” Meng Hao said, looking back at Fang Xiufeng. He was actually far more worried than Fang Xiufeng was.

“There’s no need to worry. With Patriarchs Shoudao and Yanxu helping, then if I fail, then I guess all my years of cultivation have been a foolish waste!” Fang Xiufeng laughed heartily, but then his expression turned serious. “I’m a cultivator, and my life... has been focused on eventually stepping into the Dao!

“From the Spirit Realm to the Immortal. From the Immortal Realm to the Ancient. From the Ancient Realm to the Dao. The further along you get, the less likely you are to succeed. However, that shouldn’t be a reason to avoid the danger, nor an excuse to not take that final step!

“I have transcended the tribulations of Ancient Realm Soul Lamp extinguishing, one by one. What does this trifling Dao Stepping Tribulation count for? If I really fail, then at least I’ll have a hundred years of longevity left that I can use to protect you and your sister. My only regret... will be that I will not be able to abide by my agreement to stand guard for 100,000 years!” With that, no further trace of anxiety regarding stepping into the Dao could be seen on Fang Xiufeng.

He could have chosen to be like Guru Heavencloud, to hold back from stepping into the Dao. He could have been cautious, and thus lived longer. Without any tribulation, there would be no risk to his life, and he could have lived in safety.

Actually, in addition to the danger of the tribulation itself, one of the main reasons that many cultivators chose to remain in the great circle of the Ancient Realm was because they couldn’t suppress that desire to remain safe and alive.

“Dad, you’re gonna succeed!” Meng Hao said staunchly. Those words were actually not uttered from the standpoint of a son, but rather... were backed by his status as the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Fang Xiufeng smiled. At the same time, Meng Li and Fang Yu flew up

from below, joined by Sun Hai. The entire group hovered in midair, unable to keep themselves from looking nervously at Fang Xiufeng.

“Alright, alright,” Fang Xiufeng said, smiling gently at his wife and daughter. “You don’t all need to come with me. Having Hao’er along should be enough.”

Meng Li looked at Fang Xiufeng and nodded.

“I’ll be waiting for you to come back,” she said softly.

“Yes, I’ll be back for you!” he replied with a laugh. Then he turned and flew off into the distance with Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu.

Meng Li watched her husband leaving and, voice quavering, said, “Meng Hao, take good care of your father. I’m... entrusting him to you.”

“Don’t worry, Mom,” Meng Hao said resolutely. “Dad’s going to be fine!” He looked over at Fang Yu and Sun Hai, nodded, and then followed Fang Xiufeng and the others.

“Dad,” Fang Yu murmured, biting her lip, no longer able to suppress her anxiety. “Good luck stepping into the Dao. I’ll be praying for you to succeed!”

Fang Xiufeng’s laughter echoed back from off in the distance, filled with exuberance and determination.

The four Fang cultivators were all speeding off in the direction... of the Great Tang Forbidden Palace!!

Meng Hao had never paid much attention to the Great Tang government itself. However, ever since the year he had caught a glimpse of Emperor Tang in his Imperial City, and realized he had a profound cultivation base that was roughly the same as Meng Hao’s own father, he had realized that the Great Tang was indeed extremely mysterious. 1

“So, we’re going to the Great Tang!” he murmured to himself as he saw the Great Tang Imperial City getting closer. There were countless mortals there, and it was a flourishing place. Dusk was falling, but the brilliant light cast by numerous colorful lanterns made a spectacular scene. Then

there was the Forbidden Palace itself, which looked like an enormous sleeping beast!

As they neared, Meng Hao was able to make out a figure sitting on the Dragon Throne, wearing Imperial robes, watching the four of them approach. 2

As Meng Hao peered at the Great Tang Imperial City, Fang Shoudao looked over at him with a kind smile and asked, “Hao’er, do you find this odd?”

“Yeah, it seems strange. Why are we going to the Great Tang? What secrets are locked up here?”

“Hao’er, the Fang Clan of the past was an Allheaven Clan,” Fang Shoudao explained slowly. “Our first generation Patriarch was the last bloodline member of that clan. The clan that he founded afterward is the Fang Clan that we know today, which has played such a central role in the affairs of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.” Some of these things Meng Hao already knew, and others were things which did not need to be kept secret from him now, considering his status.

“There are a few other matters that it’s time to tell you. The reason that the modern Fang Clan is an Allheaven Clan is because you awoke our bloodline. That is why you are our eternal Patriarch!

“The more powerful you become, the faster that awakening will proceed. After it is complete, the Allheaven power will be unleashed with increasing efficacy!

“If you are able to step into the Dao Realm, then the Fang Clan will truly be able to rise to prominence, and be restored to its former glory!” Anticipation gleamed in Fang Shoudao’s eyes. Although Fang Yanxu was normally very taciturn, his expression was also one of excitement and anticipation, and when he looked at Meng Hao, it was with warmth and kindness.

“Perhaps you already know that Allheaven Clans... existed in the Immortal World, before the formation of the Mountain and Sea Realm. In the Paragon Immortal Realm, Allheaven Clans were the most glorious

among all the clans. Even the Paragons had to treat them respectfully.

“Also, the Fang Clan was not the only Allheaven Clan. In total, there were nine!” Fang Shoudao explained slowly.

“Of course, the nine Allheaven Clans fell apart during the war, and countless of their people were killed. For example, almost the entire Fang Clan was wiped out in the war. As for the sole remaining bloodline, it was many years until the first generation Patriarch appeared here in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“Nowadays, descendants of those nine clans are scattered throughout the Nine Mountains and Seas. Some, like our Fang Clan, could be considered to have been reestablished. Others have completely vanished into the pages of history.

“You should know that the Fang Clan is not the only Allheaven Clan in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. There is another such clan... right here! And that clan is... the Great Tang!!” By this point, Meng Hao’s heart was pounding.

Fang Xiufeng didn’t seem surprised. He had conferred quite a bit with Fang Shoudao in recent days, and knew about all these matters pertaining to Allheaven Clans. Furthermore, because he was standing guard over Planet South Heaven, he also had a good understanding of the Great Tang.

“The Great Tang is actually the Li Clan, and not the same Li Clan as that which currently exists in the Ninth Mountain and Sea! 3

“Actually, of the nine Allheaven Clans, they were the clan that survived mostly untouched. In fact, by the time the war was coming to an end, when the Mountain and Sea Realm was formed, their whole clan was still intact. That was because they had been entrusted with a special mission. They were to use the power of an Allheaven Clan to protect the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“However, even in the early days of the Mountain and Sea Realm the war was still ongoing. In the final battle, a gap was opened, breaching the Mountain and Sea Realm. If that gap were ever to be torn completely open, the Mountain and Sea Realm... would cease to exist.

“In that critical time, the final Allheaven Clan, the Li Clan, chose to make a clan-wide blood sacrifice. Every member of the clan, men and women, old and young alike, all sacrificed themselves to make a door. That door closed the gap, ensuring that the powers of the Outside world could not enter. And thus ended a war that had lasted for tens of thousands of years!

“That gap is in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, behind Planet South Heaven!

“Therefore, from that time onward, Planet South Heaven became a very special planet in the Mountain and Sea Realm. It also came to be known as the Door of South Heaven!

“From then on, there was a new empire on Planet South Heaven, called the Great Tang. The entire Li Clan sacrificed themselves to protect the Mountain and Sea Realm, leaving behind only a single clan member to maintain their ancestral device and prevent the Outside world from entering. It was the clan’s mission, and even if there was only one person left to carry it out, that mission remained. And that... is how things have continued, down to this day.” All of these things were matters that had been revealed to Fang Shoudao after he had gone to visit the clone of the first generation Patriarch recently.

“Your father stands guard over Planet South Heaven, and the Li Clan stands guard over the Door of South Heaven!

“It is because of the special nature of Planet South Heaven that it is impossible for Dao Realm experts to enter it. Only by suppressing our cultivation bases to the great circle of the Ancient Realm can we do so. Otherwise... Planet South Heaven as a whole would view us as enemies, and would eradicate us!

“However, that doesn’t mean that it is completely impossible for Dao Realm cultivators to be here. In order for a Dao Realm expert to remain here, that person must gain the approval of Planet South Heaven. Furthermore, the only person who can make that happen, is... the Great Tang, the Li Clan!”

When Meng Hao heard all of this, his heart trembled. Although he already knew many secrets, quite a few of them were things he had been told, and did not understand based on experiencing them personally. As such, his understanding was incomplete. For example, he had been completely clueless regarding the identity of the Great Tang.

He could only imagine what it must have been like years ago for the Li Clan to watch one Allheaven Clan after another be exterminated while they, in order to accomplish their mission, were forced to hold back their power and not participate in the fighting. They must have felt torn, and at the same time, they were obviously tenacious.

When the gap opened up in the Mountain and Sea Realm, they didn't hesitate to perform a blood sacrifice of their entire clan to create the Door of South Heaven. They sealed the gap, accomplishing the mission of their clan. What a heroic sacrifice!

Now he understood why, when first encountering Emperor Tang all those years ago, he had felt such a desolate loneliness within his majesty. He was the only survivor of his entire bloodline. Their sacrifice was like a curse for him. There had been many successive generations of people like him, the Emperors of the Great Tang, all of whom were charged with upholding the original mission. For all eternity, they would protect the Mountain and Sea Realm by standing guard over the Door of South Heaven.

Meng Hao's eyes filled with respect as he followed his father, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu. They flew into the Great Tang Imperial City and toward the Forbidden Palace. The sun was just about to set, and all of a sudden, Meng Hao recalled what Fang Shoudao had mentioned about Dao Realm cultivators being unable to enter Planet South Heaven. Then he thought about the giant he had fought, as well as the monkey face.

"Without gaining approval, the Dao Realm will be exterminated?" Meng Hao asked suddenly.

"Without exception," Fang Shoudao replied.

Meng Hao's heart trembled, and he began to breathe heavily. Great

waves of shock rolled through him, as well as doubts. As far as he could tell, there were only three possible explanations.

One explanation was that the giant and the monkey were both approved of by the Li Clan. However, that was clearly not possible. The second explanation was that the world of the Divine Flame was somehow unique. The third explanation... was a possibility that left Meng Hao feeling even more shaken. Perhaps the giant and the monkey only appeared to be in the Dao Realm, but the versions of themselves within the Divine Flame world... were actually not in the Dao Realm!

For example, Meng Hao was currently capable of slaughtering 2-Essences Dao Realm cultivators, despite not being in the Dao Realm himself. Despite that, he was not the subject of extermination by Planet South Heaven.

Although that third explanation seemed preposterous, Meng Hao could not help but come to the conclusion that it was most likely true.

*

1. Meng Hao briefly met Emperor Tang in chapter 802.
2. The Emperors of ancient China usually sat on what was called the Dragon Throne.
3. One reason Fang Shoudao specifically points out that they are different clans is that this Li Clan shares the same common surname Li 李 with the Li Clan of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. It might seem confusing, but again, Li is a very common surname. For example, it's the same surname shared by Jet Li (Li Lianjie) and Bruce Lee (Li Xiaolong). However, Jet Li and Bruce Lee are not related, nor are they from a Li Clan in ISSTH. In English, it could be likened to Will Smith and Anna Nicole Smith, who both share the surname Smith, but are not from the Smith Clan in ISSTH.

Chapter 1183: Facing Tribulation in a Mysterious Location!

Meng Hao maintained his silence as they proceeded along toward the Great Tang. Soon, the four beams of light were just outside the Forbidden Palace. In the main hall up ahead, not a single person could be seen other than Emperor Tang on the Dragon Throne.

Everything was quiet, with pressure weighing down from all directions. The lanterns in the area were dim, casting Emperor Tang in flickering shadows that made it difficult to make him out clearly. Only his two brightly shining eyes were visible.

Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu walked forward and, despite the level of their cultivation bases, clasped hands and bowed deeply to Emperor Tang.

Fang Xiufeng did the same.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered like lightning, and his face was extremely solemn as he also bowed. He knew that although the Patriarchs and his father were bowing to Emperor Tang, what they were showing respect to... was the sacrifice of the Allheaven Li Clan for the entire Mountain and Sea Realm.

A clan like that deserved respect from everyone, even other Allheaven Clans. They showed their bravery in the early days of the Immortal World calamity, when the war had just begun, and also afterwards, when things were unstable. In the end, their clan-wide sacrifice... was an even greater display of bravery.

Everything was quiet, and no one spoke. After a long moment, a sigh could be heard from within the main hall, a long sigh filled with ancientness. As it echoed about, the entire hall lit up, and Emperor Tang rose to his feet from the Dragon Throne, then slowly walked out of the hall.

He was a middle-aged man wearing a Dragon robe, powerful and impressive as he stood there, as if all of Planet South Heaven would be

wreathed in shadow because of his presence. It was as if he was the Lord of South Heaven!

Actually, as one of the successive descendants of the Allheaven Li Clan who stood watch here, he... really could be called the Lord of South Heaven.

Although his cultivation base wasn't at the absolute pinnacle, he was the only person on Planet South Heaven who could call upon the power of his bloodline, the will of his ancestors, to control the spell formation that had been formed by the collective sacrifice of the Allheaven Li Clan.

With that spell formation, he could cut down Dao Realm cultivators as easily as turning over his hand!

"Brother Xiufeng," he said slowly, "I'm aware of the purpose of your visit....

"It is an important matter, something which has never occurred before. I'm actually uncertain... as to whether or not it will work.

"Hopefully, it will. However, if it fails, then even if you do step into the Dao Realm, you will be instantly slaughtered by the spell formation. Even I will be incapable of preventing that from happening. This will make your experience of stepping into the Dao even more difficult, by several times. Are you... really sure you want to try it?" His voice echoed out, filled with boundless pressure that caused the clouds up above to roil, and the lands to tremble.

The words he had spoken were true; he could control the spell formation, but only in the sense that he could use it to attack. He could not prevent it from carrying out its primary function. If anything, he might be able to hold it back for a short time to allow Fang Xiufeng to flee off of Planet South Heaven after he stepped into the Dao.

However, Fang Xiufeng... couldn't leave Planet South Heaven. Things would be much easier for him if he ended up in the Quasi-Dao Realm. However, if he truly stepped into the Dao Realm, he would essentially be facing certain death.

When Meng Hao heard this, his heart trembled. He looked over at Fang Xiufeng, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu, who were waiting to hear his father's response. Whatever it was, they would support him.

In truth, it didn't matter that Fang Xiufeng wasn't in the Dao Realm. He would still be considered the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan. However... although that wouldn't be a problem in the short term, it would make it inappropriate from the clan's standpoint once Meng Hao left the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and it would be inevitable that some clan members would eventually raise objections.

Therefore, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu had both agreed that they would not hold anything back. They would do everything they could to help Fang Xiufeng step into the Dao.... In that case, he would be the true Clan Chief, unshakable and unmovable.

As for the particulars of how Fang Xiufeng went about doing that, it was his decision. No one, not even Meng Hao, could influence him.

Fang Xiufeng was silent for only a moment. He didn't need a long time to think. He gave a carefree laugh and then said, "Since I'm here, what's the point in backing out? Brother Li, thank you for going out of your way to help."

Fang Xiufeng's expression was calm; his eyes flashed with determination, and his heart was completely focused. He was the type of person who couldn't settle for being ordinary, and had always had lofty aspirations. The only reason he had suppressed them and agreed to stand guard over Planet South Heaven was for Meng Hao's sake.

Now that Meng Hao was finally freed from his curse, Fang Xiufeng's heroic ambitions once again soared!

"Dad...." Meng Hao murmured anxiously.

"Hao'er, father is a cultivator as well!" Fang Xiufeng said, looking back at him. His gaze was soft, and his words were spoken quietly. However, his simple sentence revealed the deep ambitions he harbored. It spoke to his pride, and revealed how focused he was on his cultivation.

As Fang Xiufeng's words echoed out into the air, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu looked on with sparkling eyes, and nodded slightly.

"So you're set on doing this, Brother Xiufeng," said Emperor Tang. "I understand." Emperor Tang looked deeply at Fang Xiufeng, then turned and waved his sleeve. Colors flashed and everything shook. All of the lands of South Heaven trembled, and the entire planet seemed to shake.

The shaking was even more intense in the Forbidden Palace. A moment later, the main hall vanished, to be replaced by a huge, spinning vortex that was the color of blood!

That color came from the blood of the Allheaven Li Clan, congealed during their sacrifice. As the vortex spun, it seemed as if all of Planet South Heaven had become frozen in time as an indescribably intense pressure weighed down, covering the entire planet. Emperor Tang stood next to Fang Xiufeng, looking at him.

"In there is the secret realm of the Li Clan, the wellspring of our bloodline. Brother Xiufeng, Senior Shoudao, Senior Yanxu, and... Hao'er, all of you may enter. I will remain outside to stand as Dharma Protector!"

Fang Xiufeng took a deep breath and looked at the blood-colored vortex, eyes shining. Then he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Emperor Tang before striding forward into the vortex. Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu shot forward in streaks of light as they followed Fang Xiufeng.

Last was Meng Hao. After bowing to Emperor Tang, he headed toward the vortex, and was just about to step in when the Emperor spoke, his voice soft.

"You have a good father. He's sacrificed a lot for you."

Meng Hao paused for a moment, then continued onward into the vortex, vanishing.

Inside the blood-colored vortex was a world the color of blood. Everything was blood-red. There were no plants, no mountains, no rivers. There was only flat, crimson ground stretching out in all directions.

However, up ahead of them could be seen a huge door, which flickered

back and forth between illusory and corporeal. It was covered with a thick layer of blood that formed a howling face.

Every howl that came out of its mouth caused ripples to spread out and fill the entire blood-colored world. Every time the ripples faded, it was possible to see that, far up in the sky, there was a huge net-like spell formation!

That spell formation covered everything, and stretched out as far as the eye could see. Divine sense could not touch it, and the only reason it could be seen... was because of the flowing ripples.

This was the very door that had been formed by the sacrifice of the entire Li Clan, and the spell formation up above... was the extermination formation that covered all of Planet South Heaven!

Fang Shoudao looked around and then said, "This is the Ancestral Land of the Li Clan, and also the nucleus of Planet South Heaven!"

"When stepping into the Dao in this place, there is a chance to be accepted by the spell formation, and thus avoid being slaughtered!"

Suddenly, a rumbling sound could be heard coming from the door.

The suddenness of the sound caused Meng Hao's eyes to flicker. He looked over and saw that the blood-colored door was bulging, as if a hand were stretching out from it.

It appeared as if something was on the other side of that door, roaring, erupting with cultivation base power in an attempt to open the door!

However, blood-colored light flickered, and ten blood-red faces appeared. As they howled, the ripples grew more intense, and whatever it was that was inside the door trembled and retracted its hand.

Meng Hao sucked in a breath and asked, "What's on the other side of that door...?"

The person to answer the question was not from the Fang Clan. Instead, the voice of Emperor Tang echoed out to fill the blood-colored world.

"Behind that door is a path, a path... that is not guarded by the 33

Heavens. It is guarded by the two major powers which waged war against the Immortal World long ago.

“That door must never be opened!”

Meng Hao nodded and took a deep breath. Finally, he looked away from the door toward Fang Xiufeng.

Fang Xiufeng smiled slightly and sat down cross-legged. Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu waved their hands. Almost instantly, the light of a spell formation flared up, swirling around Fang Xiufeng. After that, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu also sat down cross-legged across from each other, flanking Fang Xiufeng. Their expressions were very serious.

“Hao’er, you sit over there,” Fang Shoudao said solemnly. “Together, we will form the Trifecta Dao Formation. All you need to do is use your Dao Immortal cultivation base power to support your father.

“The Trifecta Dao Formation is the first step in helping your father in transcending tribulation. We can’t be lax in any aspect!”

Meng Hao’s expression was one of determination as he walked over to the position indicated by Fang Shoudao and then sat down cross-legged. He immediately rotated his cultivation base, causing azure light to shine up. Shockingly, azure light also began to shine off of Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu.

However, their light was much dimmer than Meng Hao’s.

Even still, Emperor Tang, who was watching the scene via divine sense, was shocked.

“The Allheaven Fang Clan... has been awakened...?”

“An Allheaven Dao Immortal has appeared in the world, and an Allheaven Clan is once again rising to glory...” A strange light began to gleam in his eyes.

“Trifecta Dao Formation, activate!” Fang Shoudao roared. “Xiufeng, what are you waiting for? Begin stepping into the Dao!!”

As the sound of his words echoed out, Fang Xiufeng’s eyes began to glow

with a piercing light. He raised both hands and pushed up into the air.

At the same time, his cultivation base exploded, as he used the full power of the great circle of the Ancient Realm to open the Dao Stepping Path!

Chapter 1184: Dao Tribulation!

In almost the same moment that Fang Xiufeng's cultivation base exploded with power, the blood-colored sky overhead was ripped apart by seemingly invisible hands to reveal a starry sky.

Simultaneously, a huge vortex appeared up above, whose rotation caused the entire blood-colored world to distort as the power of the Dao Realm... descended to Planet South Heaven!

All of Planet South Heaven rumbled, and countless cultivators looked up into the sky with expressions of astonishment. What they saw was the sky distorting as a shocking vortex appeared. Its rotation caused innumerable motes of dust to float up into the air, and even the Milky Way Sea began to seethe.

Everyone from the Fang Clan sat cross-legged, expressions of anticipation on their faces as they looked up. They were filled with excitement, as they all knew that their Clan Chief Fang Xiufeng was currently transcending tribulation to step into the Dao!

Meng Hao's mother and sister were in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, along with Sun Hai and many others. They were nervous, and Meng Li was even clutching tightly at her garments, shivering slightly as her heart filled with numerous anxieties.

Meng Hao's sister was acting exactly the same.

As of this point, the eyes of virtually everyone on Planet South Heaven were fixed upon that vortex!

The rumbling grew increasingly intense as a path slowly became visible.... If one could step onto that path despite all of the tribulations, then entering the Dao Realm was a possibility!!

In the blood-colored world, Fang Xiufeng's eyes shone with a strange light. He lowered his left hand and pushed onto his dantian region, while his right hand viciously slapped his forehead. At the same time, a rumbling sound could be heard as Fang Shoudao's body trembled, and his

flesh visibly withered.

Simultaneously, Fang Xiufeng threw his head back and roared, and all of a sudden... a ghost image of himself appeared. Shockingly, this was a type of clone, an image that looked exactly like Fang Xiufeng, which flew up into the air toward the vortex.

Fang Shoudao began to explain.

“Meng Hao, this Trifecta Dao Formation uses the cultivation base power of three people to help your father create three clones, all of them as powerful as his true form. By using these three clones to transcend the tribulation, he will have a much easier time succeeding!”

Meng Hao looked up into the sky and saw the huge vortex filled with crackling lightning, numerous bolts of which were already shooting down. Fang Xiufeng's clone shot forward to meet the powerful lightning, lightning that was actually larger and more terrifying than the lightning that Guru Heavencloud had faced.

It was powerful enough to destroy worlds, and it transformed into a sea of lightning that smashed toward Fang Xiufeng.

A huge boom rang out. Everyone watched as Fang Xiufeng's clone threw his head back and roared, then performed an incantation gesture to summon divine abilities and magical techniques that fought back against the lightning.

Time passed, and everyone was shocked by the astonishing events playing out in front of their eyes. After the first tribulation passed, Fang Xiufeng's clone was injured and tired, but continued onward toward the vortex. It was at this point that rumbling sounds echoed out as the second tribulation descended... the Weapon Tribulation!

Based on what Meng Hao knew from watching Guru Heavencloud stepping into the Dao, there were a total of nine tribulations, each one successively more intense. If you could beat them all back, then step into the vortex, you would be half finished with the process. Having transcended the tribulations, you would be qualified to achieve the Dao.

Guru Heavencloud had failed in the middle of the third tribulation, and currently, Fang Xiufeng was facing the second tribulation. Various weapons materialized, sweeping forth with astonishing power. Rumbling sounds echoed out as nine of them bore down on Fang Xiufeng's clone.

Meng Hao was looking on nervously as Fang Xiufeng's clone spread his hands wide, his eyes glittering with a cold light. He then waved his hands in front of him, causing colors to flash and the sky to tremble. The nine weapons suddenly stopped in place for a moment, then trembled with energy and shot forward again.

Booms echoed out constantly, and the roars of Fang Xiufeng's clone echoed out into the ears of all the cultivators on Planet South Heaven. When his wife and daughter heard them, they became even more anxious than before.

The direct bloodline clan members of the Fang Clan were also waiting in nervous anticipation, waiting for their Clan Chief to step into the Dao!

The sky flashed as the nine Tribulation Weapons surged with power and a desire to cut down anyone who attempted to transcend the tribulation. As the rumbling echoed out, Fang Xiufeng's clone advanced relentlessly.

"Get the hell out of my way!" Fang Xiufeng's clone suddenly sucked in a deep breath. As he did, his eyes shone with cold light, and boundless energy of Heaven and Earth roiled toward him and was absorbed. Wild colors flashed up above, and Fang Xiufeng's clone began to shine with brilliant light, making him look like a blazing sun.

Suddenly, an illusory sword materialized in his outstretched right hand. He stepped out with his right foot, bending his body like a bow and then slashing down with the sword, unleashing a blinding stream of light.

The sword qi pulsed with indescribable energy, causing everything else to grow dark and blurred. Fang Xiufeng's clone, and the sword he held, were the only things that were incomparably bright and clear.

"My Dao is the Dao of the sword, and the sword is the king of all weapons! Trifling Weapon Tribulation... do you really dare to block my way!?" The clone's echoing voice was filled with incredible pressure as the

sword light shone out toward the nine weapons of the Weapon Tribulation.

When they slammed into each other, a massive boom echoed out. The sword light exploded with scintillating, intense power, causing everything to vibrate. A supreme, paramount aura even rose up from the sword!

Boom! The first weapon fell into pieces!

Then the second, the third, and the fourth....

In the blink of an eye, seven weapons were turned into ash. The remaining two, however, continued to struggle through the sword light. As they neared the clone, he didn't even dodge, but let out a cold harrumph instead.

The sound of it caused the two weapons to tremble and then collapse into fragments, which then turned into nothing more than ash. They... had already reached the point of collapse, and were pushed over the edge by the mere sound.

Fang Xiufeng had successfully transcended the second tribulation. His energy soared brightly, as if stepping into the Dao was a simple matter for him!

Had Guru Heavencloud not been killed, and were now able to watch what was happening, he would be flabbergasted. After all of his own years of preparation, he had only been able to pass the second tribulation. Fang Xiufeng was clearly far, far more powerful than he had been.

Of course, much of that had to do with the Trifecta Dao Formation, which bolstered Fang Xiufeng's cultivation base and gave him three clones. Because of that... things were much easier, and he could explode out with even more power.

By this point, the third tribulation was approaching. This was the tribulation that had rocked Guru Heavencloud, in which four black-armored figures appeared.

However, as soon as they materialized, and before they could even make a move, Meng Hao waved his right hand, sending his divine will out to the

figures. Immediately, they stopped, then clasped hands and bowed to Fang Xiufeng. After that, they turned and disappeared back into the vortex.

They retreated without even putting up a fight!!

This sight caused Fang Xiufeng's clone to stare in shock. He wasn't the only one. All of the cultivators on Planet South Heaven who were watching the scene couldn't help but be astonished. Even Meng Hao's mother and sister stared, eyes wide with disbelief.

"Now nothing can prevent your father from transcending this tribulation," Fang Shoudao said.

"That's right," replied Fang Yanxu. "Xiufeng has prepared well. Even I couldn't match up to him, back when I stepped into the Dao."

"From the look of it, being stationed here on Planet South Heaven is actually an opportunity for Xiufeng."

As Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu continued to discuss the matter, the serious looks on their faces faded into more relaxed expressions.

From their perspectives, whether or not he would transcend the tribulation was now not even in question. Fang Xiufeng had already proven that he could step into the Dao even without their help. Clearly, his eventual success was without question.

What they were worried about now... was what would happen with the Planet South Heaven spell formation after he succeeded.

However, Meng Hao wasn't so confident. For some reason, when he looked at his father's clone up in midair, he got a very nervous feeling. It was as if something really bad was about to happen, although he wasn't sure what.

"What's wrong here?" he thought, his eyes narrowing. "Why does it feel like something is off...?" The misgivings inside his heart only continued to grow stronger.

By this point, the fourth and fifth tribulations were arriving. The fourth tribulation was the Five Elements Tribulation. Metal, wood, water, fire,

earth. Five different tribulation powers appeared from within the vortex, which then materialized into five enormous dragons that roared as they shot toward Fang Xiufeng's clone.

This battle was much more difficult than the previous ones. Fang Xiufeng's clone held nothing back, wiping out one dragon directly, and then self-detonating to take out three more. Only the Water Dragon remained. At this point, Fang Yanxu roared, and suddenly, his body withered. At the same time, a ghost image stepped out of Fang Xiufeng, who was still sitting in the middle of the Trifecta Dao Formation.

This was his second clone, which flew up in a beam of sword light to slaughter the fifth and final dragon. There wasn't even a slight pause as the sixth tribulation descended.

The sixth tribulation emerged in the form of a single character, the character Dao 道. It hovered there, radiating bizarre light. Anyone who could see it would notice that the character didn't seem stable. It was constantly transforming back and forth between nine different versions. However, each one of those permutations of the character represented... the Dao!

Rumbling echoed out as intense pressure radiated out from the nine Dao characters. Fang Xiufeng's clone threw his head back and roared, erupting with cultivation base power. Numerous sword images appeared around him, which then transformed into a Dao mist!

The Dao mist spread out in all directions, reaching 30,000 meters, which vastly exceeded Guru Heavencloud's. It swirled around Fang Xiufeng's clone as an illusory sword appeared in his hand, and he shot toward the nine Dao characters.

"Tribulation... begone!" As Fang Xiufeng's voice echoed out, Heaven and Earth trembled. Sword light rose up, filled with azure light that slashed toward the nine Dao characters. Fang Xiufeng was completely confident that this sword strike... would vanquish the sixth tribulation!

That was because he... was Fang Xiufeng!

However, it was at this exact point that Meng Hao realized that his

father's clone was glowing with azure light. Suddenly, his mind began to spin.

“Dad! Suppress your Dao seed!!”

Chapter 1185: Allheaven Tribulation!

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, Fang Xiufeng's sword connected with the nine Dao characters. A huge boom echoed out, accompanied by boundless, dazzling light. The sixth tribulation's nine Dao characters instantly collapsed, turning into nothing more than drifting ash.

At the same time, the azure light shining up from Fang Xiufeng grew even more blinding, as if it had been provoked by some catalyst.... As the light grew even brighter, the Dao seed inside of him began to melt.

As it did, a bit of Allheaven Immortal aura appeared, something which Meng Hao was very familiar with. It wasn't the aura of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, but rather, the first stage of an ordinary Allheaven Immortal.

At last, he realized why he'd had such a bad feeling. That bad feeling came from... the Dao seed!

If the Allheaven Immortal within Fang Xiufeng awoke at this time, and the tribulation didn't change, then it wouldn't be a problem. However... if the terrifying nature of the tribulation changed in accord with the explosive rise of an Allheaven Immortal, then Fang Xiufeng's tribulation would become much more difficult!

As the azure light flickered off of Fang Xiufeng, and the Dao seed began to melt, the vortex up above suddenly lurched to a stop, as if it had sensed something. Then, intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the vortex suddenly increase in size, by ten times!

The sight of it caused all the onlooking cultivators on Planet South Heaven to stare in shock. Of course, few of them really understood what was happening. Only select clan Elders had any clue.

Most people had never watched other Dao Stepping Tribulations. However, the Elders who had seen one were astonished as they instantly realized that something different was happening.

Meng Li could also tell that something was amiss, and her face fell.

Back in the blood-colored world, Fang Shoudao's eyes went wide. He looked at the vortex, which was now ten times larger than before, then looked back at Fang Xiufeng, and a bitter expression appeared on his face. Finally, he let out a long sigh.

Fang Yanxu shook his head, and an expression of helplessness appeared.

"These two things are incredible boons, but when put together, they make... a complete catastrophe."

Meng Hao's face was extremely unsightly, and as for Fang Xiufeng, he immediately understood what was happening. His clone hovered there silently in midair, looking up at the vortex. Finally, he chuckled.

"Well, this is fine too. This way, I can truly experience Dao Stepping Tribulation. Since I've decided to transcend tribulation, the only way left is forward...." He began to laugh heartily. However, even as his laughter rang out, an intense rumbling could be heard coming from within the vortex.

The vastly enlarged vortex spun, as... the seventh tribulation arrived.

The seventh tribulation was that of... the copper coins!

Copper coins began to flow out of the vortex. Originally, there should only have been nine, but now, with the vortex having increased in size tenfold, there weren't nine copper coins, there were... ninety!!

Each and every one of the coins looked exactly the same. On one side of each coin could be seen an image of the Eight Trigrams, and on the other side were characters that looked like magical symbols. Furthermore, each and every coin emanated power that could shake Heaven and Earth.

Intense rumbling filled the air as the coins descended!

"Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree Tribulation," Fang Shoudao murmured, "the manifestation of a precious treasure of the Mountains and Seas. This Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree has Heaven-rending, Earth-crushing power!!" Up in midair, Fang Xiufeng's clone threw his head back and laughed. Sword qi billowed up from him as he shot toward the ninety copper coins.

“The tribulation power has increased tenfold, huh? Well, who cares!?” Fang Xiufeng’s clone transformed into the image of a sword, rumbling through the air toward the coins.

In the instant that they were about to slam into each other, an archaic voice suddenly spoke out from within the ninety copper coins.

“Mountain Ghost....” it said. Immediately, the rightmost two characters on the backs of the copper coins suddenly began to shine with blinding light.

Gradually, ninety roars could be heard, shaking everything, as ninety images materialized from within the ninety copper coins. They were none other than... Mountain Ghosts!!

Mountain Ghosts were actually Mountain Gods that hadn’t been officially appointed, and thus, could not be referred to as Gods. Instead, they were called Ghosts!

Their appearances were ferocious, and they surged with energy and power. When they appeared, they immediately charged toward Fang Xiufeng with indescribable speed.

Rumbling filled the air as fierce fighting unfolded. Merely the first exchange caused Fang Xiufeng’s clone to cough up blood, and his body was half destroyed. Even still, his sword hacked through all ninety of the Mountain Ghosts, transforming them into nothing more than ash.

However, the seventh tribulation wasn’t over yet. Even as the ninety Mountain Ghosts fell to pieces, the archaic voice once again echoed out.

“Mountain Ghost lightning; kill the Ghosts and subdue the spirits; slaughter Demons and ward off evil; maintain the eternal purity of the Gods....” 1

RUMMMBLE! As the voice echoed out, ninety bolts of lightning shot out from the ninety copper coins. These lightning bolts looked completely different than the Tribulation Lightning from the first tribulation. They were filled with an aura of killing, as if they were paramount in Heaven and Earth, and represented the Dao of the Heavens to slaughter everything

it considered evil!

Fang Xiufeng's clone threw his head back and roared, causing more sword qi to explode up and slam into the ninety lightning bolts. The clone was shoved backward step by step as he sliced apart one bolt after another, blood spurting out of various wounds. By the time the sixty-third lightning bolt hit him, the clone couldn't hold out any longer and exploded.

In that moment, the remaining twenty-seven lightning bolts shot at high speed through the blood-colored air toward Fang Xiufeng's true self.

Meng Hao's eyes were shot with blood, and his cultivation base exploded with power. Using the Trifecta Dao Formation, he poured energy into Fang Xiufeng, allowing him to create a third clone. As soon as the clone materialized, he shot up toward the twenty-seven lightning bolts and slashed at them with his sword.

A huge boom echoed out as the twenty-seven lightning bolts collapsed. Then he charged onward toward the ninety copper coins, sword qi raging in attack. The ninety copper coins began to fade, and yet they didn't collapse. Instead, they swirled about in the air, merging together into a single copper coin which then vanished into the vortex.

It wasn't that Fang Xiufeng had forced the copper coins into retreat. Instead, the fact that he had been able to endure the ordeal meant that the seventh tribulation was over. Now, the eighth tribulation appeared.

The eighth tribulation was a massive finger that stretched out from the vortex. It emanated a vast pressure, and apparently contained the amassed power of the Mountains and Seas as it launched an attack against Fang Xiufeng.

This was far different from an ordinary Dao Stepping Tribulation. The Dao Stepping Tribulations experienced by Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu in the past had been like children's games compared to this!!

"Allheaven Tribulation!!" Fang Shoudao murmured, giving voice to the conclusion he had reached earlier.

When Meng Hao heard those words, his pupils constricted, and his heart filled with anxiety. He looked up at his father's clone, and the enormous finger. The finger struck the clone, and the clone exploded into a haze of blood and gore. Then his father's true form rose to his feet in the middle of the Trifecta Dao Formation. Without the slightest hint of hesitation, he flew up into the air.

"Dad!!" Meng Hao cried, shooting to his feet. His eyes were shot with blood, and he couldn't hold back any longer. He had to directly assist his father in fighting back against the Heavenly Tribulation.

"Hao'er," Fang Shoudao said, moving to block his way, "you're not in the Dao Realm. This is your father's tribulation, and you can't interfere. If you do, you won't be helping him, you'll be harming him!" Then he exchanged a glance with Fang Yanxu, and the two of them nodded.

Decisive gleams appeared in their eyes as they raised their heads and looked up at Fang Xiufeng facing the descending finger. Then, both of them took deep breaths and simultaneously... let out an astonishing roar.

"DAO!!" they bellowed. The sound of it caused colors to flash in the sky and a huge wind to scream. Essence power erupted, and natural laws manifested. Heaven and Earth distorted as they... called upon the Dao to rebuke the Heavens!

As they joined forces, their Essences, their Daos, and their natural laws appeared around Fang Xiufeng, causing his Dao mist to instantly increase by tenfold. As it reached its peak, Fang Xiufeng shot toward the finger and slammed into it. Blood instantly sprayed out of his mouth, as well as out of the mouths of Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu.

However, the heavy price they paid caused the finger to tremble and then collapse into pieces. Fang Xiufeng passed through the remnants, approaching so close to the vortex that it seemed possible for him to step into it.

However, it was at this point that the ninth tribulation appeared. There was no physical manifestation to this tribulation. Instead, it was invisible. It was... the Deva Tribulation!

The blight of Deva was an invisible tribulation; anyone who attempted to step into the Dao would have to undergo the three blights of Heaven, Earth and Man!

Heaven blighted the spirit. Earth blighted the body. Man blighted the soul!

Fang Xiufeng trembled. His spirit seemed to be corroding, and he staggered in place, black blood oozing out of his mouth. Then, his body began to wither to the point where he seemed on the verge of becoming a skeleton. Simultaneously, his soul seemed to be under attack, and was rapidly melting.

He roared, and the Dao mist around him seethed as he inhaled a portion of it to restore his injuries. However, it did little to help in his attempt to transcend this tribulation. The tribulation was still there, and if he continued to breathe in the Dao mist and wasted it all, then even if he was able to step into the vortex, he would be unable to truly step into the Dao.

The true purpose of the Dao mist was to be used after stepping into the vortex. Having too little at that time could have very negative consequences.

Meng Hao was trembling, and his heart pounded with nervousness. However, there was nothing he could do. Even though he wanted to charge out into the fight, he didn't dare to, lest he end up harming his father.

It was at this moment, however, that Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu both gritted their teeth, then joined their voices to say, "Thou shalt take my soul and be blessed!"

Then they pushed down onto their foreheads, causing a rumbling sound to echo out. Blood sprayed out of their mouths, and their bodies withered even more. However, their souls suddenly rose up from the tops of their heads.

Shockingly, they were using their own souls, minds, and bodies to help Fang Xiufeng! Together, they would overcome the ninth tribulation, the final tribulation!

1. The coin described here is actually a real coin used in Chinese culture. All of the characters are the same, and the Eight Trigrams can be seen on the reverse side. For more information about the Eight Trigrams, you can read RWX's basic primer to the Dao [<http://www.wuxiaworld.com/what-dao-heck-a-very-basic-primer-to-the-dao>].

Chapter 1186: The Murderous Intentions of the Ninth Lord!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he also raised his hand and then pushed down hard onto his forehead. He was not in the Dao Realm, and thus didn't dare to make a move. However, he did have the Essence of Divine Flame, which caused a sea of flame to erupt out of the top of his head, and then fly up along with Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu to help his father deal with the Deva Tribulation.

Even as the three of them jumped to Fang Xiufeng's aid, all four coughed up blood. However, the weakening that Fang Xiufeng had been enduring slowed significantly.

Meng Hao's face was pale white. His mind, body and soul were all melting rapidly, and yet his eyes gleamed with determination. He was willing to pay virtually any price to help his father.

Rumbling echoed out as Meng Hao, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu split the force between them. Fang Xiufeng panted. His body was incredibly weakened and fatigued, and yet, he was now only nine meters away from the vortex!

All he had to do was span those nine meters, and he could enter the vortex and step onto the path!

However, the final nine meters were the most terrifying part of the ninth tribulation. Even without the tenfold increase in power, that final stretch was difficult enough that it proved too much for many ordinary cultivators who were attempting to step into the Dao. With the tenfold increase, it wasn't even necessary to discuss how much more terrifying it now was.

Fang Xiufeng coughed up a mouthful of blood. With every step he took, he withered even more. His mind, body and soul atrophied. After moving forward for six out of the final nine meters, Fang Xiufeng reached his limit. It was the same for Fang Shoudao, Fang Yanxu and Meng Hao. If they continued any further, the injuries they were sustaining would no

longer be temporary, but permanent.

However, even if they became permanent, Meng Hao didn't care.

"Patriarch Shoudao, Patriarch Yanxu, allow me to sustain the permanent injuries," he said. Meng Hao took a deep breath. He was just about to explode with more mind, soul and body power, to give the last bit of assistance possible to his father, when Fang Shoudao suddenly roared, the sound of which echoed throughout Planet South Heaven.

"All members of the Fang Clan will sacrifice their blood to help the Clan Chief step into the Dao!"

As his words rang out, all of the members of the Fang Clan on Planet South Heaven trembled. Without the slightest hesitation, they slapped their chests, causing blood to spray out of their mouths. The massive quantity of blood then shot up into the air.

Meng Li's blood could not be added in, but Fang Yu's could. Without a moment of hesitation, she spit the blood out, holding nothing back. After she had done so, her body teetered back and forth, and her face was bone white. However, her blood floated up into the air to join the rest.

Sun Hai rushed to hold her up. Although his heart twinged in pain at her sacrifice, he did nothing to stop her.

A vast amount of blood soared up toward Fang Xiufeng. His body trembled, and he almost seemed to be preparing to refuse the blood. He felt guilty at not being able to step into the Dao on his own, instead having to rely on the sacrifices of his fellow clan members.

Those sacrifices were not impossible to recover from, but Fang Xiufeng felt guilty nonetheless.

However, he gritted his teeth, and looked around at the seething Dao mist around him. Finally, he absorbed some of it, not to heal himself, but rather, to help Meng Hao, Fang Shoudao and all the other clan members.

"Xiufeng, stop it!" Fang Shoudao cried. "You don't need to help us heal. Fang Yanxu and myself can do that on our own. As for the other clan members, we have plenty of medicinal pills in the clan that can help them

recover. Hao'er doesn't need any help at all. The best way you could help us is to step into the Dao!"

"Dad," Meng Hao yelled, "hurry up and step into the Dao!" There was something else that went unsaid, which was that the great debt that Fang Xiufeng owed the clan would also be borne by Meng Hao!

Fang Xiufeng's heart trembled, but he was a decisive person. Without any further hesitation, he used the power of the blood to cross the final three meters.... He was like the fish who leaped over the dragon gate! He stepped into the vortex and down onto the path that represented the Dao Realm!

In that instant, the Deva Tribulation vanished, and the vortex stopped spinning and went completely calm. The tribulations ceased, and Fang Xiufeng stood there alone on the path.

At the same time, ripples appeared, with Fang Xiufeng at their center. Ripples... that spread out through the whole Ninth Mountain and Sea.

These ripples resulted from stepping into the Dao, and were something that would occur any time a cultivator successfully transcended the tribulation and stepped into the vortex.

The result was that everyone else in the Dao Realm became aware that someone had reached this point!

Guru Heavencloud had not successfully entered the vortex, so nothing like this happened at that time. But now that Fang Xiufeng had succeeded, the ripples spread out instantly. All of the other Dao Realm experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea could then sense what was happening, and sent their divine sense out to focus on Planet South Heaven.

"Fang Xiufeng is stepping into the Dao!!"

"The future Clan Chief of the Fang Clan will be in the Dao Realm...."

"Wait a second, that's not right. How can he step into the Dao on Planet South Heaven? If I remember correctly, in order to save his son, he agreed to never step half a pace off Planet South Heaven. He even pledged an oath upon the Mountains and Seas which, if he violates, will destroy him

in body and soul!”

“I can’t believe... that he’s stepping into the Dao on Planet South Heaven. How is this possible?!?” All of the Dao Realm experts who sensed what was happening were shocked.

“It’s not over yet. He’s only halfway to a complete success. His chances of failing are still as high as before!”

“If he does succeed, after stepping into the Dao, he’ll have to take nine steps to get one Essence. Fang Xiufeng chose to step into the Dao with the sword, which is the most difficult of all Daos. Those nine steps... will be too difficult.” By now, the shocked divine sense of all of the Dao Realm patriarchs was focused around Planet South Heaven.

Meng Hao could no longer remain seated cross-legged. He rose to his feet within the blood-colored world, and his eyes were fixed up above on his father, who stood there on the path.

His Dao Stepping Tribulation was ten times as powerful and difficult as usual. Normally, he could have stepped easily into the Dao, but with the increased difficulty, it would have been impossible without the aid of the whole Clan. Otherwise, he would have ended up just like Guru Heavencloud, reduced to a Quasi-Dao cultivator with a limited life span.

That was something that Meng Hao could not accept; nor could his mother or sister.

Seeing his father standing there on the path didn’t cause Meng Hao to breathe a sigh of relief. Instead, he was even more worried than before. He could only imagine how difficult the nine steps would be, considering how much more difficult they would be than normal.

“Nine steps for one Essence,” Fang Shoudao said. “Your father’s Essence of the Dao of the sword is focused on killing, which is essentially a type of Slaughter Essence. That’s fundamentally difficult... but now, it will be even more difficult because of the Allheaven....” He sighed, looking older than ever.

“However, if he succeeds...” Fang Yanxu said, his eyes shining brightly

with anticipation, “your father might just be a 1-Essence Dao Realm cultivator, but his battle prowess will be comparable to a 3-Essences Dao Lord!”

All of the cultivators on Planet South Heaven were looking at the vortex as Fang Xiufeng took his first step. As he did, rumbling sounds echoed out, filling the vortex and causing it to shake. The only people who could possibly understand what it felt like to be on that path were Dao Realm experts or perhaps Quasi-Dao Cultivators.

Meng Hao had no idea. All he could see was his father trembling after having taken his first step. Ripples emanated out from the vortex, even more violently than before, causing all of the starry sky in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to tremble.

At the same time, the Dao mist converged over the top of his head, forming something that was impossible to make out.

Then, Fang Xiufeng struggled to take a second step, and he trembled violently. When he took the third step, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he looked like a lamp running low on oil, about to burn out.

After taking the third step, the ripples surging out from the vortex grew even more intense, shaking the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea with their madness. From the level of intensity, it seemed that if all nine steps were taken, the starry sky of the Mountain and Sea Realm itself would be shaken.

Furthermore, after taking those three steps, the Dao mist above Fang Xiufeng’s head consolidated, gradually forming into a shape that resembled a sword.

However, Meng Hao wasn’t paying attention to the sword; he was focused on his father. His face was currently ashen, exactly the same as the faces of his mother and sister.

“Stepping into the Dao involves nine steps, each of which is critically dangerous....” Fang Shoudao said through gritted teeth. He then lifted his right hand, and his fingers flashed with an incantation gesture. He waved his hand toward the outside world, affecting, not Fang Xiufeng within the

vortex, but instead, all of the Fang Clan spell formations out on Planet South Heaven. They began to glitter and shine, and then erupted with explosive power. Shockingly, they appeared to be connecting to the teleportation portal on Planet East Victory, forming a channel.

What approached via that channel was not any cultivator... but rather...

“Dao bell, please protect the Clan Chief as he steps into the Dao!!” As Fang Shoudao’s voice echoed out, the air above the ancestral mansion on Planet East Victory shimmered as the Dao bell appeared. It began to toll, sending the sound through the teleportation portal all the way to Planet South Heaven!

It passed through the void and into the vortex, and when Fang Xiufeng heard its toll, he trembled and took a fourth step, then a fifth and a sixth!

It was as if his spirit had been bolstered. His energy surged, and the ripples outside of the vortex began to surge violently. All of the Mountains and Seas were trembling, and the starry skies were shaking. All of the Dao Realm experts now became aware of what was happening.

The Dao mist above Fang Xiufeng’s head was rapidly forming together to form the shape of a sword. It even seemed to have a sharp edge now, and most shocking of all was that it was the color of blood! That was an omen of... using the Dao of the sword to acquire the Essence of Slaughter!

Fang Xiufeng took a seventh step, and he shivered. His energy was now waning; the assistance from the Dao bell could only push him so far, and couldn’t help him to succeed completely. Fang Xiufeng gritted his teeth and then roared as he pushed with everything he had to take yet another step!

Eight steps!!

He was now only one step away from achieving his Dao. However, even as he lifted his foot up into the air and prepared to take that ninth step, Meng Hao suddenly heard a voice echoing through the void and into his mind.

“Citing the laws of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Lord of the Ninth

Mountain and Sea has requested that the Allheaven Immortal who is currently stepping into the Dao... be destroyed. This matter is not a priority to the Mountain and Sea Realm, nor can a decision about the matter be made by the Mountain and Sea Realm itself.

“Therefore... the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Sea shall make the decision. Lords, please state your opinions.”

Chapter 1187: Father Achieves the Dao!

Before Fang Xiufeng could complete his ninth step, cracks spread out across his body. At the same time, something enormous was happening in the Mountain and Sea Realm that nobody on Planet South Heaven knew anything about!

That matter would determine whether or not Fang Xiufeng stepped into the Dao. It was a secret, an enigmatic event that very few people in the entire Mountain and Sea Realm were aware of!

The only people who did know were the ones at the utmost peak of power. In fact... they were the people who actually controlled the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Before the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm appeared, they... were essentially the collective Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm. They were... the Mountain and Sea Lords of the various Mountains and Seas!

Currently, the voice that echoed out through the Mountain and Sea Realm filled the minds of those Lords!

It was a cold voice, devoid of any emotion. It didn't matter how far apart those nine people were, separated by the Mountains and Seas, they all could hear it.

"Citing the laws of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea has requested that the Allheaven Immortal who is currently stepping into the Dao... be destroyed. This matter is not a priority to the Mountain and Sea Realm, nor can a decision about the matter be made by the Mountain and Sea Realm itself.

"Therefore... the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas shall make the decision. Lords, please state your opinions."

On the majestic peak of the Ninth Mountain was an enormous eye, within which sat a cross-legged old man. Eyes gleaming with killing intent and decisiveness, he softly said, "As the Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, I say... destroy the Allheaven Immortal who is stepping into the Dao!"

At the same time, all of the other Mountain and Sea Lords in the other Mountains and Seas quietly made their decisions.

After a moment of silence, the cold, emotionless voice once again rang out into the minds of the nine.

“Of the nine Mountain and Sea Lords, five agree to destroy the Allheaven Immortal. Three disagree. One abstained from voting.... In accord with the will of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the Allheaven Immortal will be destroyed!”

As soon as the word ‘destroyed’ rang out, Fang Xiufeng’s body trembled, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He appeared to be on the verge of collapsing into pieces.

“NO!!” Meng Hao screamed. Of everyone on Planet South Heaven, he was the only one who could hear that voice speaking. Suddenly, he charged forward, ignoring any possible danger as he shot up into the sky.

Meanwhile, back on Planet South Heaven, Meng Li trembled and likewise shot into the air. Although facing the Dao Stepping vortex involved extreme danger, she didn’t hesitate. Neither did Fang Yu, who also took to flight.

Sun Hai didn’t pause either, not even to think. As soon as Fang Yu sprang into motion... he also flew up.

If you go, so do I!

Within the vortex, Fang Xiufeng’s body was gradually breaking apart. He hadn’t completed the nine steps, and that final step would remain forever incomplete. He was breaking apart in a way that wasn’t necessarily lethal. If he wished, he could disperse the Dao mist, allowing it to be destroyed instead of his body. Then he would be left with an extremely limited lifespan.

Fang Shoudao’s face darkened, and he sat there without saying a word. He had already done everything he could; he had called upon the Dao, drawn upon his soul and asked the whole clan to join in the sacrifice....

The Dao bell had even been summoned. However, it appeared that none

of that could change Fang Xiufeng's fate.

"He should have been able to easily step into the Dao.... Allheaven Immortals, Allheaven Immortals.... An Allheaven Immortal regardless of success or defeat." Fang Shoudao suddenly seemed to grow even older.

It was the same with Fang Yanxu. They looked at Fang Xiufeng in the vortex, and then saw Meng Hao desperately flying forward. This time, Fang Shoudao did nothing to stop him.

Because... there was no need.

Within the Heavenly vortex, Fang Xiufeng sighed. His face was covered in cracks, and his body was beginning to fade away, causing beams of azure light to shine out from him.

The feeling of imminent death caused him to sigh. Seemingly emanating an aura of death, he turned and looked at the roaring Meng Hao. He also saw his wife and daughter charging toward him.

"Oh well," he murmured softly. "It seems I won't be stepping into the Dao. However, I have no regrets, except... that I won't have more time to spend with all of you...." Just when he was about to disperse the Dao mist and cease his attempt to step into the Dao, all of a sudden, a cold snort echoed out. The sound was ancient, and filled with boundless pressure. It came through the teleportation portal, from... Planet East Victory!

All of Planet East Victory was shaking, as if its will were awakening. As the planet awoke, the lands shook, and within the Fang Clan's Ancestral Land, in the necropolis, the first generation Patriarch sat there cross-legged, and... his eyes opened!

"As an Allheaven Clan, my Fang Clan fought for the Immortal World until I was the only person left!

"And now... the Fang Clan is on the rise again. Our blood has awakened, and the glory of an Allheaven Clan is once again on the cusp of appearing.... Why should we be subjected to this arrangement!?"

"If this were an ordinary stepping into the Dao, I would not interfere, not even if he were to die. But now, things have changed because of the

awakening of the blood of an Allheaven Clan. As for this tribulation... enough is enough!

“If Paragon Nine Seals had not perished, even he would respect an Allheaven Clan such as mine. And you... you are nothing more than a spirit automaton, formed out of natural laws. The Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas all maintain a portion of those natural laws, and therefore... I will not hold it against the Mountain and Sea Realm itself. But as for the rest of you, Lords of the Mountains and Seas, I will personally rectify your mistake of attempting to destroy my Fang Clan!”

The voice echoing out was not audible to everyone. The only people who could hear it were the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas, and considering his identity, Meng Hao!

Simultaneously, a beam of light shot out from Planet East Victory. It moved with explosive speed, rapidly transforming into nine beams, one of which headed toward the Ninth Mountain, and the other eight of which shot through the void toward the other eight Mountains and Seas!

The Ninth Mountain rumbled, and the enormous eye let out a roar of fury. However, blood spurted out from it and dripped down, causing the entire Ji Clan to be shaken.

As for what happened in the other Mountains and Seas, nobody knew. However... back on Planet South Heaven in the Heavenly vortex, Fang Xiufeng was suddenly pushed forward and... took his ninth step!

In the moment that his foot stepped down, Fang Xiufeng’s eyes went wide. Everyone watching gaped in astonishment. At the same time, the Dao mist above his head fully materialized into a sword!

A... blood-colored sword!!

The sword descended down into Fang Xiufeng through the top of his head, and suddenly... he erupted with the aura of the Dao Realm!!

Ripples exploded out from the vortex, sweeping across the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea before fading away to reveal Fang Xiufeng!

He was confused about what had happened, and he wasn’t the only one.

Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu were shocked and panting. They almost couldn't believe what had happened, and all of the other Dao Realm experts who had been watching Planet South Heaven were equally astonished.

"He clearly failed.... How could he possibly have ended up succeeding!?"

"What exactly happened just now!?!?"

"Inconceivable! This is completely impossible. Throughout all the years that the Mountain and Sea Realm has existed, nobody has ever mysteriously gone from a state of obvious defeat into one of utter victory!"

However, it didn't matter what people thought or said. Fang Xiufeng... had successfully stepped into the Dao!

The cultivators from the Fang Clan weren't sure what exactly caused it to happen, but after seeing that Fang Xiufeng had stepped into the Dao, they were ecstatic.

"Greetings, Clan Chief!"

"Clan Chief, congratulations on successfully stepping into the Dao!"

"Congratulations, Clan Chief!!" Calls of congratulation swelled up, and all of Planet South Heaven was shaken. Meng Li flew up and embraced Fang Xiufeng, tears streaming down her face.

Fang Yu and Sun Hai also approached, weeping.

"Dad... you did it!" Fang Yu said, weeping and laughing at the same time.

"Congratulations, Dad!" Meng Hao said, hovering off to the side. Seeing his dad safe caused him to sigh with relief. However, hidden behind that smile was something he didn't want his parents to see, and that was the cold, murderous feelings he held because of what had just nearly occurred to Fang Xiufeng.

Meng Hao would never be able to forget the voices he had heard. He also gained a new understanding of his identity, and how it pertained to the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole. The rise of an Allheaven Clan was a threat to other Mountain and Sea Lords, and especially... to the Ji Clan.

That was why the Ji Clan had taken such decisive, murderous action!

However, true threat of death actually didn't come from any one cultivator, but from the Mountain and Sea Realm itself, from the powers of natural law that had tried to cut down Fang Xiufeng! From Meng Hao's perspective, it must have occurred because the Ji Clan's Patriarch Ji Tian had paid a high price to make it happen. If any Mountain and Sea Lord could blithely do such a thing, then no one would ever dare to challenge them to battle.

But that wasn't the case. The Mountain and Sea Lords could be supplanted. Therefore, as of this moment, Meng Hao decided that he would make Ji Tian pay for what he had done.

"Ji Tian, one of these days, you shall die!" Meng Hao's smile was as cold and sharp as a blade as he gazed up into the sky. He still wasn't sure why exactly Ji Tian had chosen such a method to try to kill his father. But he had to ask himself whether or not some undying enmity existed between his father and Ji Tian.

"Is it because of me, or because Ji Tian can't get to father because of him being on Planet South Heaven?" Meng Hao's eyes glittered. The fact that someone had tried to kill his father took things over the line. To him, that was a violation of a huge taboo, and although he looked normal on the surface, his heart raged with fury and towering killing intent.

He had never experienced rage like he was feeling now, nor had he ever wanted to kill someone as much as he now wanted to kill Ji Tian. Therefore, he decided... that it was an enmity that absolutely must be seen to its end.

Fang Xiufeng looked at his wife and daughter, then at Meng Hao. Meng Hao might be able to hide his true feelings from Meng Li and Fang Yu, but not from his father.

He looked at the rage boiling in Meng Hao's eyes, and his heart trembled. However, before he had much time to think about it, Meng Hao smiled and once again said, "Congratulations, dad."

Fang Xiufeng smiled and was about to respond, when suddenly his face

fell. Simultaneously, Meng Hao's face also fell. Down below, similar reactions could be seen on the faces of Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu!

That was because... all of the clouds completely vanished from Planet South Heaven, to be replaced... by a massive, illusory net!

That was... Planet South Heaven's spell formation!

Chapter 1188: South Heaven Death Formation!

As soon as the spell formation appeared, it covered all of Planet South Heaven. At the same time, Meng Hao, Fang Shoudao, and Fang Yanxu... and all other cultivators, felt an intense, explosive burst of killing intent.

It was like a terrifying divine sense that swept across the lands, covering Planet South Heaven. Meng Hao's face fell as he sensed the horrifying power, and realized that it was something he couldn't possibly fight back against. If that power wanted to exterminate something, it could be exterminated in the blink of an eye!

Fang Shoudao's face went pale, and Fang Yanxu started trembling. Meng Li's face fell, as did Fang Yu's.

"That's the Death Formation of Planet South Heaven!!"

"Dammit, obviously the spell formation doesn't approve of Xiufeng stepping into the Dao, otherwise it wouldn't have activated!!"

"It's going to wipe Xiufeng out!!"

RUMBLE!

Heaven and Earth shook as an incredibly powerful force sprang into being, pushing everyone away from Fang Xiufeng. Nobody could resist it, not even Meng Hao, who was inexorably pushed away until Fang Xiufeng stood completely alone.

It happened too quickly. Moments ago, everyone had been congratulating Fang Xiufeng on successfully stepping into the Dao. But now, everyone was gaping in shock at the massive transformations occurring in Heaven and Earth.

Fang Xiufeng's eyes flickered. As soon as the killing intent appeared, he pushed his cultivation base down from the Dao Realm to the great circle of the Ancient Realm.

However, the killing intent only continued to get stronger and stronger.

Peals of thunder echoed out from the illusory net as it shot down toward Fang Xiufeng, filled with a shocking murderous intent which morphed into a power of extermination. In just a brief moment, the destructive power was nearing Fang Xiufeng.

If Fang Xiufeng had failed to step into the Dao and become a Quasi-Dao cultivator, then Planet South Heaven's spell formation would not have appeared, regardless of whether it approved of him or not. After all, the spell formation only targeted the Dao Realm. Unless Emperor Tang took control of it, it wouldn't harm Quasi-Dao cultivators.

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red as he exploded into action. The Lightning Cauldron appeared in his right hand, and electricity danced as he attempted to switch positions with his father. However, despite the dancing electricity, the Lightning Cauldron didn't work!

Because of South Heaven's spell formation, it was useless!

Meng Hao wasn't willing to give up. Eyes flashing with madness, he shot forward like an arrow, intent on piercing the net to help his father.

However, as soon as Meng Hao touched the net, he felt a massive force pushing back against him, like a power of expulsion. He heard countless screaming voices shoving him away, preventing him from entering the area within the net.

However, the net didn't hurt him. It only prevented him from interfering with the will of the South Heaven spell formation!

Meng Hao's face was pale, and he began to laugh bitterly. He... could do nothing. Now, as before, he could only watch, and provide no assistance whatsoever. This was his father, his blood relative, and therefore, the feeling of helplessness which filled his heart made him want to scream in rage.

Meng Hao's mother and sister were shrieking as they watched Fang Xiufeng face this danger.

It was at this point, however, that a growling roar echoed out from the Great Tang's Imperial palace.

“With mine own Li Clan blood, I call upon the spirit of the ancestor within the spell formation. This man... is the guardian of South Heaven. He is... from the Allheaven Fang Clan. He must not be harmed or killed.....” In accompaniment with the words, massive rumbling struck Heaven and Earth. The net seemed to pause, and at the same time, a figure materialized out of thin air next to Fang Xiufeng.

He wore an Imperial robe and an Emperor’s crown. It was none other than Emperor Tang, who grabbed Fang Xiufeng and then sped with him down toward the ground. Just when they seemed to be on the verge of touching down, boundlessly bright lightning suddenly shot down toward Fang Xiufeng, filled with intense killing intent.

After landing on the ground, Emperor Tang’s voice once again rang out with urgency, “Brother Xiufeng, the spell formation has neither been defeated, nor has it achieved victory. Had it succeeded, I would never have been able to rescue you just now. Quickly, sit down and begin to meditate. I will give you a drop of Li Clan blood. After you fully absorb it, I will cast one of my ancestor’s Daoists magics so that the spell formation will approve of you. However, you need to hold out for the time it takes an incense stick to burn!

“That short time will be a grave test for you....

“If you pass it, then you will be the only Dao Realm expert on Planet South Heaven!

“If you fail... then henceforth, you and I shall not meet again in the world of men....” Emperor Tang’s words were spoken quickly. Even as the words left his mouth, he waved a finger, first at Fang Shoudao, and then at Fang Yanxu. Both of them vanished, then reappeared next to Fang Xiufeng.

“If you two want him to survive for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, then you need to do everything you can to help him. However... remember that you must not under any circumstances use the power of the Dao Realm. If you do, not only will Fang Xiufeng be defeated, you will also die!” Having said that, Emperor Tang sat down cross-legged and waved his hand, causing a drop of blood to fly out and fuse into Fang

Xiufeng's forehead, who began meditating.

Emperor Tang's eyes gleamed with concentration. He was just about to close them when a hoarse voice was transmitted into his ears.

"Emperor Tang, let me in too!" Meng Hao said, eyes bloodshot. Emperor Tang's gaze flashed, and he hesitated for a moment, but then he waved his finger.

Immediately, Meng Hao vanished and then reappeared next to Fang Xiufeng.

Having done these things, Emperor Tang closed his eyes and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, utilizing a secret magic of the Li Clan to help Fang Xiufeng gain the approval of the spell formation.

The enormous illusory web continued to rumble toward them. Although it didn't harm Planet South Heaven in the least, the killing intent within it continued to grow stronger. Strange colors flashed, and the wind blew.

Fang Shoudao's eyes shone with a bright gleam as he suddenly flew up into the air, followed by Fang Yanxu. They immediately set to work fighting the net, not using the power of the Dao Realm, but rather, cultivation bases that had been restricted to the great circle of the Ancient Realm.

Meng Hao also flew into the air, joining the other two. Almost immediately, blood sprayed out of the mouths of all three of them. The target of the net was Fang Xiufeng, but it could still hurt them, although only to a certain extent.

That was especially true of Meng Hao, whose face was pale, and who immediately sustained terrible internal injuries. He began to tremble, but clenched his teeth and fought on, battling against the net to gain time.

Fang Shoudao roared, and Fang Yanxu's energy surged. However, no matter what they did, the result was only that the net's arrival slowed down. They could do nothing to actually stop it.

After ten breaths of time passed, rumbling filled Meng Hao, and boundless azure light shone out from his blood. The power of an

Allheaven Dao Immortal exploded out as he slammed against the net, causing a huge boom to echo out. Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu did the same.

The sky shook and the lands quaked. The net was again slowed by the attacks. However, it continued to close in, forcing the three of them back and narrowing the perimeter.

The time it takes an incense stick to burn isn't very long, but under these circumstances, Meng Hao felt as if time had slowed to a crawl. He wasn't sure exactly how much time had already passed, but he was constantly being pushed back. His clothes were already soaked in blood, and yet the net had already shrunk to the point where it only left them with a few dozen meters of room.

It was at this point that Fang Yanxu's face fell, and he stopped fighting. Apparently, he was having trouble keeping his Dao Realm cultivation base concealed. If it were to be revealed, he would be in critical danger.

Finally, he gritted his teeth, fought back with one last powerful volley, and then shot through the net to the other side, where he hovered in the air, his face grim but his eyes apologetic.

Without Fang Yanxu, the shrinking rate of the net increased. Meng Hao and Fang Shoudao were now under more pressure, especially Meng Hao, who had been injured to begin with, and whose cultivation base was nowhere near Fang Shoudao's. He might have his Eternal stratum, but he was shaking nonetheless, trembling as his body withered.

Fang Shoudao roared; he was now on the point of being unable to hold back his Dao Realm cultivation base. Gritting his teeth, he slapped his chest viciously, injuring himself as a way to force his cultivation base to remain suppressed.

However, that was not a long-term solution. By now, more than seventy percent of the incense stick's worth of time had passed, and Fang Shoudao's face was ashen, his body trembling. Despite his tactic of self-injury, he had reached his limit, and was on the verge of losing control of his Dao Realm cultivation base. He sighed.

“Hao’er, I’ve done all I can. Please... don’t hold it against me.” He looked older than ever, and his face was bitter as he flickered away. No longer able to fight the net, he was now on the outside, struggling to keep his cultivation base under control. However, the sighs he uttered were deep and profound.

Of the three that had been holding off the net, Meng Hao was now the only one left. His cultivation base was the weakest, and yet, he was able to hold out for the longest. That was because he had no Dao Realm cultivation base to reveal, and didn’t need to worry about holding back. His eyes were crimson, and he was coughing up blood continuously. However, he didn’t back down. By now, the net had shrunk down to the point where it was only fifteen meters wide!

Behind Meng Hao, his father sat cross-legged. He was not willing to give in, and even as the net shrank down, a wild look appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes. He extended his right hand and waved it, causing the meat jelly to appear.

“Protect my father!” Meng Hao said. The meat jelly immediately came to rest on Fang Xiufeng, transforming into a set of armor that completely covered him. Meng Hao’s blood was boiling as he then lifted his hand... to reveal his fourth Nirvana Fruit!

Without the slightest hesitation, he placed it onto his forehead. The Nirvana Fruit rapidly dissolved, and sounds like thunder immediately began to reverberate from within him.

He let out a piercing cry, and his body trembled as dazzling azure light shot out. An indescribable level of cultivation base power suddenly surged out, and it almost looked like a door had appeared within him.

That was... the great Door of the Ancient Realm!

It was as if it were being summoned, causing massive clouds to gather in the sky, within which was the Great Door of the Ancient Realm!

Borrowing power from the fourth Nirvana Fruit, he raised both hands up and then slammed them down toward the ground. Rumbling sounds echoed out from within him as the blast shot down into the ground, then

surged back up in a backlash toward the huge net.

Chapter 1189: Father Must Not Perish!

As of this moment, everyone was looking on in shock as Meng Hao slammed his hands into the ground. A mist of blood spurted out of him, and his aura weakened. However, the end result... was astonishing!

The illusory net trembled, and even backed up a bit. As of now, Meng Hao's father only had 60 breaths of time left until the entire incense stick's worth of time was up!

Meng Hao knew that the enormous net was not using its full power against him, but only a tiny portion. The spell formation was only interested in killing Dao Realm cultivators who entered Planet South Heaven. That was the entire purpose of the sacrifice of the Li Clan.

To the cultivators of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the spell formation actually offered a certain degree of protection. However, because Fang Xiufeng was violating the laws of the spell formation, he was now the subject of its deadly attack.

In the moment that the spell formation fell back, there were sixty breaths of time left. Meng Hao suddenly felt as if there were hope. But then, the spell formation suddenly flickered with light, and its killing intent erupted once more. Meng Hao could now just make out images of innumerable figures who existed within the net, all of whom seemed to be filled with determination and focus as they pushed the web forward.

It bore down with incredible speed. Even with his fourth Nirvana Fruit, Meng Hao was powerless to fight back against it. In fact, the fourth Nirvana Fruit was forcibly expelled from his body.

Trembling, he staggered backward. The net closed in, and suddenly... passed directly through him to envelope Fang Xiufeng. The meat jelly armor shuddered, but could not hold on for long. As for Fang Xiufeng, he was at a critical moment in absorbing the drop of blood, and couldn't move. The net was just about to pass through the meat jelly and land on Fang Xiufeng. Once it did so, its killing intent would reach a fever pitch and cause Fang Xiufeng... to immediately be killed in body and spirit, his

soul completely departed.

“NO!!” Tears of blood poured down Meng Hao’s cheeks, and his expression was fierce. He let out a maddened roar, and suddenly lifted his right hand up and pointed up into the heavens. Instantly, the drop of Paragon’s blood began to rumble, as he sent a call to the sun and moon of the Mountain and Sea Realm, which vibrated in response. A beam of light shot down from them which pierced through the void and instantly slammed into the huge net.

He was now using the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm itself to resist the net.

Massive rumbling filled the air, and the net shook and was shoved back slightly by the beams of light. It wasn’t that the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm was insufficient, but rather, this was Planet South Heaven, and the spell formation had been created by the sacrifice of the Li Clan. The power of the Mountain and Sea Realm wasn’t willing to destroy it!

In fact, unless there was absolutely no other choice, Meng Hao didn’t want to do that either. He admired the Li Clan, and respected the spell formation. But this was a critical, life-or-death moment for his father. Meng Hao’s choice... would always be to place family above anything else!!

When the light of the sun and moon slammed into the net, it trembled slightly, and moved away from Fang Xiufeng. As for Meng Hao, he paid a heavy price to unleash this attack, an even greater price than he had paid to do the same thing in the Windswept Realm. After all, on that occasion, he had used the power to kill Outsiders, but now, he was causing the Mountain and Sea Realm to harm itself.

Therefore, the price he paid was heavier. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he watched as the net shrank down again. His father was now at an extremely critical moment, and his body was trembling. As of this moment, the only thought in Meng Hao’s head was...

His father must not perish!!

In his mind, he roared, “I call upon the power of my name to order the Mountain and Sea Realm to descend!” Then he waved his finger again, and

suddenly, an illusory Mountain and Sea appeared atop Fang Xiufeng.

No one could see that Mountain and Sea except for Emperor Tang, whose expression flickered.

As it descended, Meng Hao trembled. His clothes were already soaked with blood, and he was growing faint. However, in that moment his eyes suddenly shone brightly. As the Mountain and Sea descended, Fang Xiufeng stopped trembling, and the huge net was stopped. Unfortunately, in that moment, the killing intent of the net grew even more intense, and the Mountain and Sea was not willing to exert itself fully to fight it. The huge net passed through it, and then closed in once again on Fang Xiufeng.

It was as if the South Heaven spell formation would not disappear until Fang Xiufeng was dead!

Fang Xiufeng's eyes suddenly opened, and he looked at Meng Hao with a look of kindness. Sighing, he said, "Hao'er, take care of your mother and your sister. You might be the younger brother, but you're the man of the family now. From now on... they'll be relying on you...."

"Dad!!" Meng Hao cried. His hair instantly turned white, and he was so withered that he looked almost like a sack of bones. However, he was completely focused; his desire to save his father had not been reduced in the slightest, and even burned hotter than ever.

"Dad, you're not going to die! Bring on the Second Mountain!"

Rumbling could be heard as a second Mountain and Sea descended to fight back against the huge net. Seemingly mad, Meng Hao waved his finger again, causing the Paragon's blood to boil once more.

"Third Mountain!" Shockingly, a third Mountain and Sea appeared over Fang Xiufeng to fight back against the South Heaven spell formation. Rumbling echoed out as the net was once again forced back.

To fight back with the power of three Mountains and Seas was the most that Meng Hao could do with his Paragon's blood. He was shaking now, and his flesh was mangled. He... had reached his limit.

In terms of time, there were still twenty breaths left!

Booms echoed out as the net passed through one mountain after another. Soon there were only ten breaths of time left, and that was when the final Mountain and Sea vanished. The killing intent erupting from the net was maddeningly intense. By this point, the meat jelly wasn't effective at all, and from the look of it, Fang Xiufeng was just about to be wiped out.

Expression serious, he turned to Meng Hao and roared, "Hao'er, back down, now! This is my choice! Parents are supposed to sacrifice themselves for their children, not the other way around. I don't need you to save me. Back off!!" Fang Xiufeng's expression was serious, and his heart twinged with pain. Currently, the bitterness he felt far exceeded Meng Hao's.

He had no desire to perish, or to affect Meng Hao in any other way. In fact, he would rather die than do so!

Meng Hao's expression was one of determination. Completely ignoring Fang Xiufeng, he sent the Essence of Divine Flame out. It was not a sea of flames, but rather... the aura of Essence. And that aura, could also become... the aura of a Dao!

Meng Hao unleashed that aura completely, causing it to explode out with full power. At the same time, he advanced, standing directly between his father and the net, stretching his arms out wide. Shockingly, he was using his own body and his own Dao aura to fight back against the net. He was struggling to buy those final few breaths of time for his father!

The net rumbled, enveloping Meng Hao and Fang Xiufeng together. Because Meng Hao was protecting his father, he absorbed nearly sixty percent of the attack, with only about forty percent entering Fang Xiufeng.

As it did, the killing intent exploded out, and Fang Xiufeng coughed up a mouthful of blood. His soul was on the verge of being exterminated. This time, the net did not pass through Meng Hao, but instead, because of his Dao aura, it had turned from being ethereal to corporeal.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his vision dimmed. The feeling of death had never been so close. Meng Hao suddenly thought of his mother,

his sister, and also another woman; Xu Qing.

Regret filled him, and he wanted to say something, but was helpless. The world began to turn black.

“Hao’er!!” Fang Xiufeng was trembling, and a madness surged within him. He shot up from his cross-legged position just as the ten breaths of time had passed. The drop of Li Clan blood was now fully absorbed.

That was what Meng Hao had been fighting for. Were it not for him, the moment of Fang Xiufeng’s success would also have been his death.

Simultaneously, Emperor Tang finished preparing his Daoist magic, and unleashed it. The enormous web, which had not yet completely sliced through Meng Hao, flickered and then vanished from both Fang Xiufeng and Meng Hao.

As of that moment, the South Heaven spell formation officially approved of Fang Xiufeng!

Fang Xiufeng had successfully stepped into the Dao. However the price that had been paid... was enormous. For one, he was seriously injured. Furthermore, the injury was abnormal. Although it was not permanent, it would still require months of time spent in meditation to recover from fully. During that time, activity had to be limited, otherwise the injuries could end up lasting for all eternity.

However, Fang Xiufeng didn’t care about his injuries at all. He immediately grabbed Meng Hao in his arms. Meng Hao’s pale complexion and injury-covered body caused tears to begin to roll down his face.

“Congratulations, Dad....” After murmuring those two words, Meng Hao lapsed into a coma.

Meng Hao didn’t know it, but after he went comatose, the entire Fang Clan was mobilized to help in his recovery. Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu held nothing back. Even the first generation Patriarch’s clone sent some divine will to help.

Shui Dongliu came as well, although no one was aware of it. He stood next to Meng Hao’s bed, looking down at him with an increasingly moved

expression.

“So, for people who change their own destiny... anything is possible.” His eyes began to glow with a strange light. After a long moment passed, he left. His departure was not detected any more than his arrival was.

Emperor Tang also came to visit once. As he looked at Meng Hao, his heart trembled, although he didn't allow that to show on his face. He didn't tell anyone how he had seen Meng Hao summon the Mountains and Seas, nor how he now sensed... the aura of the South Heaven spell formation on him!

Meng Hao's injuries were very serious, whether in terms of his body, his mind, or his soul. He had been injured so badly that he almost died, and as such, his recovery time was also significant.

However, with the full help of the Fang Clan, his injuries were not the type that couldn't be recovered from. He remained unconscious the entire time, housed safely in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion on Planet South Heaven. His sister, mother, and father were constantly by his side to care for him.

Time passed. Eventually, the time came for the grand coronation of the Clan Chief. Under the urgings of the other clan members, as well as Meng Li, Fang Xiufeng decided not to delay things any further, and prepared to begin the ceremony.

However, although he might be the Clan Chief, in his heart, he couldn't compare at all to his son.

Eventually, the day of the grand ceremony arrived.

Chapter 1190: Grand Ceremony in the Fang Clan!

The Fang Clan was one of the Four Great Clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. In the past, they had struggled with Ji Tian for Lordship over the entire Mountain and Sea. If you added in the events of the battle of Planet East Victory in which the first generation Patriarch exploded out with power, it truly showed that the clan was as strong as ever, despite the loss of blood and wealth due to the internal strife which had struck them.

Although there would always be some suspicion that the clan was much weaker than they let on, given some time, they would surely be even more powerful than before.

Then there was Meng Hao's status as an Echelon cultivator. The news of that had already begun to spread. Coupled with the fact that he was strong enough to sweep over all the other Chosen, it ensured that the Fang Clan was clearly poised on the verge of having even greater influence.

Everyone knew that the Fang Clan had the first generation Patriarch, two Dao Realm experts, and the most powerful Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. When a clan like that held a ceremony to appoint its Clan Chief, it can easily be imagined how much of a commotion it caused.

Because Fang Xiufeng had successfully stepped into the Dao Realm, the Fang Clan's overall power was now one step higher. Aside from the Three Great Daoist Societies or the Ji Clan, no other sect or clan in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea could match up to them in terms of combat strength.

As the ceremony got under way, numerous buildings were constructed on Planet South Heaven. Countless majestic palaces sprang up, and one mountain after another was razed. The Fang Clan's citadel was now like an enormous, sprawling beast.

There were also numerous spell formations connecting Planet South

Heaven to Planet East Victory. In fact... before long, Planet South Heaven could very well become the nucleus of the Fang Clan.

Although there were certain limitations to the place, those limitations would also serve to protect the Fang Clan. By now, they controlled two planets. Obviously, their rise to power was not something that could be stopped.

Millions of Fang Clan cultivators came from Planet East Victory and spread out into various regions of Planet South Heaven. The Fang Clan's ancestral mansion was a hundred times larger than before, and it was in its central square that the grand ceremony was to take place.

On that day, starting at dawn, the teleportation portals on Planet South Heaven flashed continuously as cultivators from all of the various sects and clans throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea arrived.

There were friends of the Fang Clan, and also enemies. It was the same for Fang Xiufeng, and many who were there came for him specifically. These people could only sigh inwardly when they thought about the rumors that he had successfully stepped into the Dao. Although many people might want to challenge him to a fight, few actually dared.

Many, many people came. The Three Churches and Six Sects were present, as well as many of the large clans. There were also countless smaller sects and even rogue cultivators who flocked to Planet South Heaven, all of whom the Fang Clan arranged accommodations for.

The Three Great Daoist Societies came, and even the Ji Clan sent people. On the surface, there was no display of the undying enmity between the Fang and Ji Clans.

The Chosen of many sects and clans had friction with Meng Hao, and yet, all of those sects and clans sent representatives. Surprisingly, though... not a single one of the Chosen could be seen. It was almost as if they had collectively decided ahead of time not to come. As for Fatty, and Meng Hao's other long-time friends, none of their sects sent them to attend.

That was understandable. Meng Hao was now so powerful that he struck fear into the hearts of even the experts in the elder generation. If they had

sent disciples of the Junior generation to the ceremony, it would have been seen as an embarrassment.

Furthermore, Meng Hao's A Writ of Karma was now well-known in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Everyone knew that he liked to get Chosen members of his generation to owe him money through Karma. Therefore, the less they encountered him the better.

In the end, it was mostly older cultivators who showed up.

At high noon, when the sun blazed up above... the ceremony began!

Numerous beams of light flew through the air toward the central square of the ancestral mansion, where rows and rows of tables had been set up. Tables were even hovering in the air, tens of thousands of them. As the cultivators arrived, they were shown to their seats by the Fang Clan members in charge of the proceedings. The Dao bell was even teleported over, and hung high up in the sky, looking very threatening.

The Fang Clan ensured that all the tables were filled with everything from spirit alcohol to Immortal fruit. The ceremony was to last for three days, and the expenditure for such an affair was terrifyingly enormous. However, the number of congratulatory gifts was also scalp-numbing.

Fang Shoudao took charge of it all, being the one with the most experience in that regard.

On the first day of the grand ceremony, everyone watched as Fang Xiufeng emerged, offered sacrifices to the ancestors and called upon the starry sky. Then, all sorts of rites and functions were held before that part of the ceremony concluded.

The cultivators who had come to observe the ceremony and offer congratulations were all waiting for the second day. Customarily, the three day-long coronation of a Clan Chief for a clan as powerful as the Fang would include the formality of severing enmities. That was what most people were looking forward to.

Meng Hao was still in a coma. For him, it was like a long dream. Within that dream, he visited a special world, a place where the Mountain and Sea

Realm had just appeared. He saw a clan offering sacrifices to him, creating an ancestral gate, and setting up spell formations.

On the dawn of the second day, a huge banquet was set up in the main square. Fang Shoudao's powerful voice echoed out in all directions: "The Fang Clan has chosen Fang Xiufeng as its Clan Chief!

"Ladies and gentlemen, whatever debts or enmities he had with you will be ended this day. From now on, Fang Xiufeng is the Clan Chief, and anyone who dares to provoke, slander, or vilify him will face the wrath of the entire Fang Clan!" Fang Shoudao looked around slowly. He had already made plenty of preparations to ensure that nothing untoward happened.

The most important factor was that Fang Xiufeng was already in the Dao Realm. Everyone knew this, so it was hard to believe that people would come looking to die. After all, that is what would happen when challenging a Dao Realm Clan Chief.

"Let the formalities begin!" Fang Shoudao sat in place, and when he spoke, his voice echoed like thunder. Fang Xiufeng sat calmly next to him, looking very threatening despite not being angry. He seemed to be filled with an invisible energy that caused anyone who looked at him to tremble inwardly, and even left their cultivation base unstable.

Anyone in the Dao Realm who came had to suppress themselves down to the Ancient Realm, which meant that nobody could possibly be a match for Fang Xiufeng. He was the only person present that was truly in the Dao Realm.

A buzz of conversation could be heard from the audience. Fang Shoudao waited for a long moment, but seeing that nobody stepped forward, he closed his eyes to wait for time to pass. He didn't seem surprised at all by the lack of challengers.

However, in almost the exact moment that he closed his eyes, a burly man stepped out from the crowd. He was fully six meters tall, emanated the ripples of the Immortal Realm, and caused the ground to shake with each step.

"Fang Xiufeng, there exists no enmity between us. However, I shall stand

for the people to challenge you to a fight. After today, there will be no more such opportunities!”

Grinning, the man stamped his foot down violently, causing a boom to echo out as his cultivation base erupted with power. A windstorm instantly surged in the entire area.

However, that windstorm was simply too small. His cultivation base was clearly only in the Immortal Realm. To challenge the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan with a cultivation base like that caused all of the surrounding cultivators, including those from the Three Churches and Six Sects, to look on with strange expressions.

Fang Shoudao frowned, and inwardly, began to get an uneasy feeling.

“Fang Xiufeng, I challenge you!” the burly man roared. He seemed confident and at ease, but if you looked closely, you would see that he was trembling. Furthermore, a flicker of terror existed deep within his eyes.

He was like an ant challenging a giant to do battle! However, there was clearly some reason for him to be making a laughingstock of himself.

Fang Xiufeng opened his eyes and looked coldly at the man. It was obvious that the man was up to something. Otherwise, why would a nobody like him try to stir things up at a grand ceremony like this?

A Fang Clan cultivator immediately stood up and angrily cried out, “Enough of this horsing around! With your cultivation base, you’re obviously not settling enmities, you’re just causing trouble. Men, remove him!”

Fang Clan cultivators instantly flew toward the burly man.

Apparently, the man had anticipated that this would happen. He immediately fell back, gritting his teeth and placing a medicinal pill into his mouth. As soon as he crushed it between his teeth, his body began to tremble violently. His cultivation base exploded with power, and his energy rose wildly. He instantly broke through from the Immortal Realm into the Ancient Realm. The price was that his body withered rapidly. The medicinal pill he had consumed was clearly toxic, and drew on his life

force to forcibly increase his cultivation base.

Considering the price he was paying, he would only be able to maintain such a state for less time than it takes half an incense stick to burn. Then he would be killed in body and spirit, and nobody would be able to save him.

“Fang Xiufeng, there’s someone who wanted me to ask you whether or not you’ll honor the words you spoke on Planet West Felicity?!” With a shriek, the man coughed up a mouthful of blood and then transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Fang Xiufeng.

As Fang Shoudao looked on with furrowed brow, Fang Xiufeng’s eyes glittered, and he nodded. Then, he waved his right finger and the incoming burly man shuddered and then exploded in midair.

As soon as he died, another cultivator flew out. This man was also merely in the Immortal Realm, but he also consumed a medicinal pill, causing his energy to rocket up as he shouted at Fang Xiufeng. Fang Xiufeng sat there thoughtfully for a moment before waving his finger again.

A third, a fourth, a fifth....

One cultivator after another appeared, until the total reached forty.... All of the cultivators who had come to observe the ceremony looked on with strange expressions. The reactions were even more obvious within the Fang Clan. Anybody who saw something like this happening would be able to tell that something strange was going on.

However, things weren’t over. More cultivators appeared, all of whom acted in exactly the same way. They sacrificed their lives, resulting in Fang Xiufeng’s cultivation base being slowly worn down. On any other occasion, it wouldn’t matter. However, Fang Xiufeng still had his Dao injury, and shouldn’t even have been fighting. Perhaps one or two exchanges wouldn’t matter, but this was an endless cycle. The people who were continuously attacking him might not have very high cultivation bases, but the medicinal pills they were consuming temporarily gave them explosive power.

Fang Xiufeng could kill them as easily as crushing ants....

However... even crushing ants can be troublesome if there are too many!

Clearly, someone wanted Fang Xiufeng's injuries to reach the point where they wouldn't heal. They wanted to force him to fight.

Of course, he could refuse. He could ask cultivators from his clan to take care of the problem. However, whoever had organized this would obviously have thought of such a possibility, and would surely have prepared a contingency plan.

Fang Xiufeng's eyes flickered coldly.

This was a situation in which he could not accept the help of others. This was the Clan Chief's coronation, and his challengers were only in the Immortal Realm. If he needed help from others, the Fang Clan would be criticized for years to come, and would be viewed as a joke.

Fang Shoudao's face was very dark. Although helping Fang Xiufeng would cause problems, it was only in terms of face, leading him to consider intervening. Fang Xiufeng suddenly frowned, as if he had thought of something. He was keeping his injuries under control, but if he really did end up fighting hundreds of cultivators, then eventually he would lose control, and his injuries would flare up.

It was at this point that another cultivator flew out. Before he could even get close, he cried,

"Fang Xiufeng, you boor, my cultivation base might be weak, but I'm going to challenge you too. Do you dare to fight me?!" The cultivator was trembling, and apparently, had been forced to work up his nerve even to speak. However, he was clearly willing to throw all caution to the wind.

Fang Xiufeng eyed him coldly, and was just about to wave his finger, when all of a sudden a cold voice echoed through the air to fill the square.

"You think you qualify to challenge my dad?"

Chapter 1191: Fighting for Dad!

As soon as the voice rang out across the square, all of the cultivators felt their hearts trembling. That was especially true of the Fang Clan cultivators, who looked up enthusiastically. Even Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu had similar reactions.

Fang Xiufeng rose to his feet, looking very excited as he turned to see a young man in a blue robe walking toward them.

It was none other than... Meng Hao!

His face was a bit pale, as if he had just recovered from a serious illness. He looked much weaker than normal, and very scholarly as he approached Fang Xiufeng and clasped hands in greeting.

"I can't believe you're awake!" Fang Xiufeng said, voice filled with love. "What are you doing here? You should be resting!"

"I slept long enough," Meng Hao said, smiling. "I'm done resting. It's time for a bit of exercise." His injuries this time had been serious enough to keep him in a coma for more than a month. As soon as he woke up, he sent his divine sense out and saw what was happening, which was why he had come.

As soon as the Immortal Realm cultivator saw Meng Hao, his face fell and he backed up a few paces. "Meng Hao.... You're Meng Hao! I challenged your father, not you. You don't have the right to do anything!"

Hearing this, Meng Hao spun around, eyes flashing coldly as he looked at the cultivator.

"You know who I am and yet dare to speak to me like that?" he said coolly. "You might be looking to die, but if I feel like keeping you alive, I have plenty of ways to do so.

"You think I don't have the right to fight you? This is the Fang Clan, so if I say I have the right, then I have the right!" His voice echoed out, filled with a domineering air.

As he finished speaking, he stepped forward, and was suddenly directly

in front of the other cultivator. The man's face fell, and he was about to try to flee when Meng Hao let out a cold snort. It crashed like thunder, slamming into the cultivator's mind, prompting a bloodcurdling scream. Then, the man exploded in a burst of gore.

It was a quick and efficient kill. Meng Hao didn't mind that blood and guts were raining down everywhere. Clearly, he did things differently than his father. His father was the Clan Chief, and had many things to consider. Meng Hao was not the Clan Chief, and his goal was to intimidate.

"Well, who's next?" he asked coolly, waving his arm to flick some blood off of his sleeve.

His question was met by utter silence. All eyes were fixed on him. Many people present had only seen illusory images of Meng Hao, making this their first time seeing him in person. Now that they could lay eyes on him personally, his visage was indelibly burned into their memories.

From the way he spoke, and how he acted, it was easy to see how domineering he was. Many eyes widened as they realized that this was a person... who dared to defy laws and principles, even of the Heavens!

Fang Xiufeng smiled slightly, but said nothing. Off to the side, Fang Shoudao's eyes also flickered with a smile, then exchanged glances with Fang Yanxu. Both nodded inwardly.

Meng Hao clearly knew that there were many ways for them to resolve the current situation. However, it didn't matter how they went about it, none of those methods were truly appropriate. Considering their position in the clan and considering the circumstances, the things that were normally handled in secrecy just couldn't be done.

Meng Hao had shown up in domineering fashion and had instantly killed someone. Furthermore, the people who had had dealings with Meng Hao in the past could tell how sharp and biting his words were. After all, he hadn't met too many people who could get the upper hand on him in a debate.

Meng Hao waited for a moment, but nobody stepped forward. Voice

calm, he said, "Nobody?"

"You're looking to die, child!" Suddenly, a gale-force wind sprang up, within which was a middle-aged man who was charging Meng Hao. He was not in the Immortal Realm, but rather, the Ancient Realm.

"I'm not looking to die. I'm looking for death. Your death!" Meng Hao's voice was ice-cold as he stood there and allowed the Ancient Realm cultivator's divine ability to slam into him. It did nothing, almost as if it was a light breeze blowing past him. The middle-aged man stared in shock. At the same time, Meng Hao's hand shot out as fast as lightning to latch onto the top of his head.

"Soulsearch!" Meng Hao sent divine sense out through his splayed fingers, causing the man to shake and let out a miserable shriek. He only lasted for a few breaths of time before collapsing into pieces.

Meng Hao hovered there thoughtfully for a moment, and then suddenly vanished, only to reappear among the crowd, directly in front of one of the tables, facing an old man who sat there. The man's face flickered, and he was just about to rise to his feet when Meng Hao launched a God-Slaying Fist. The old man, and even the table, were instantly transformed into ash.

Meng Hao vanished again, reappearing in a different direction, in front of a woman. She had a jade slip in her hand which she was about to crush. Meng Hao reached out and grabbed her arm.

"Let me help you with that!" he said, tightening his grip. The jade slip, and her entire arm with it, were instantly crushed. Then he waved his arm, causing blood to spray out of the woman's mouth. Her eyes went wide with disbelief just before she was torn to bits.

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao flashed to seventeen different locations within the crowd. Each time, he appeared in front of a different cultivator, whom he immediately killed.

After a few breaths of time passed, Meng Hao returned to his original position in the main square. The crowd was in an uproar, and there were even some cultivators who were angrily berating him.

The commotion continued to intensify; from the look of it, Meng Hao's actions were going to lead to some sort of retributive calamity.

However, Meng Hao's expression was calm as he said, "Fang Clan cultivators, hear the orders of the Crown Prince. Take that man, and him, and him...." Meng Hao quickly pointed out over a hundred people. As he pointed at them, glowing marks appeared on their bodies.

All of them looked incredibly shocked.

"... and kill them all!" Without the slightest hesitation, members of the Fang Clan flew toward the people Meng Hao had just indicated.

In response, the more than one hundred cultivators roared and popped medicinal pills into their mouths, causing their cultivation bases to rise explosively. However, even in such a state, they weren't a match for the Fang Clan. Soon, bloodcurdling screams rang out and the entire group was slaughtered.

Deathly silence followed. Everyone who had been crying out in anger was now speechless. The people from the great clans and sects had maintained their calm before, but now they were all staring at Meng Hao, clearly moved.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Fellow Daoists, today is my father's grand ceremony," Meng Hao went on. "If you wish to resolve debts and grudges in the customary way, go ahead. However, if you try to do so in a way that defies custom... well then, I'll also defy custom." Although his face was a bit pale, his words were cold and biting. Quite a few people now had a much deeper understanding of him.

"What a class act you are, Meng Hao," a voice said. It belonged to an ancient old man who strode out, the shocking ripples of the great circle of the Ancient Realm emanating out from him. This was a man similar to Guru Heavencloud; he could step into the Dao Realm at any time!

"I have enmity with your father," the old man said, glaring venomously at Fang Xiufeng. "But since you want to stand in for him, I'll accommodate you!"

Fang Xiufeng looked back icily at the old man. He clearly recognized him, and yet hadn't sensed his presence earlier. Apparently the man had used some sort of technique or magical item to render him invisible even to those in the Dao Realm.

Even as the words left the old man's mouth, his body flashed through the air, and an illusory Eight Trigrams symbol appeared around him. It began to rotate, crackling with lightning as it shot toward Meng Hao. At the same time, the old man made a grasping gesture as he summoned a greatsword. He then performed a two-fingered incantation and roared, causing boundless, dazzling light to shine off of the sword. His cultivation base flared to life and his Soul Lamps appeared, which merged into the Eight Trigrams symbol, igniting it with Immortal Flame.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. As the man closed in on him, he stepped forward. Simultaneously, his energy flared, and he extended his own right hand in a plucking motion.

It was none other than the Star Plucking Magic!

Rumbling could be heard as an enormous, illusory hand appeared. It slammed into the Eight Trigrams symbol, crushing it into oblivion. The greatsword shattered, and the old man's eyes went wide with disbelief. He tried to fall back, but was too slow. The enormous hand grabbed onto him, and he let out a miserable shriek. His heart was now filled with indescribable shock and terror.

"You—" he only had time to utter a single word before he was dragged in front of Meng Hao.

He had no time to utter a second word. Meng Hao's expression was cold as he stretched his hand out and grabbed onto the top of the man's head. It didn't matter that this man was in the great circle of the Ancient Realm, similar to Guru Heavencloud. Meng Hao would still Soulsearch him.

The man howled, and his eyes were instantly shot with veins of blood. Without any hesitation, he unleashed his cultivation base, which began to emanate a Dao Realm aura. Shockingly, he was going to attempt to evade death at this critical juncture by stepping into the Dao!

Before Meng Hao had absorbed the Essence of Divine Flame, he would have been powerless to do anything at this point. But now, in some respects, he could already be considered to be in the Dao Realm. Most important was that he was now a full Allheaven Dao Immortal.

Azure light flickered on his right hand as he used his own power to disperse the Dao Realm aura, making this attempt to step into the Dao... an utter failure!

Divine sense poured into the old man's mind as the Soulsearch began.

The man quivered, then screamed, "Your majesty, save me!!"

Meng Hao's mouth curled in an almost imperceptible smile. As the old man's voice rang out, ripples flashed in the air behind him, and abruptly, a withered hand stretched out. It looked like it had just climbed up out of the grave, and reeked with an aura of death. Most shocking of all... it emanated a Dao Realm aura!

That aura was incredibly powerful, so powerful than even ordinary Dao Realm cultivators would have a hard time standing up to it.

Heaven and Earth shook, and a mighty wind screamed. All of the surrounding cultivators were completely shocked. This was Planet South Heaven, a place where Dao Realm cultivators couldn't come. And yet that hand... was clearly emanating a Dao Realm aura! There could only be one explanation.

That hand belonged... to a Quasi-Dao cultivator!!

A terrifying Quasi-Dao cultivator, lingering on the brink of death, and yet powerful enough to suppress ordinary Dao Realm experts.

The suddenness of this development was such that Fang Xiufeng, Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu all stepped forward, eyes narrowed. However, even so there was no trace of panic in them.

"Hao'er, get back!" Fang Shoudao said urgently. He stretched his hand out into the air to drag Meng Hao back to safety.

"I was just thinking that this guy didn't seem like the mastermind,"

Meng Hao said coolly. “As it turns out... he was backed by this Quasi-Dao cultivator!” He turned to face the hand and said, “South Heaven Death Formation, activate!”

Chapter 1192: Enigmatic Quasi-Dao Expert!

By the time Meng Hao turned to face the withered hand, it was only seven inches or so from his forehead, brimming with a will of destruction, as well as a boundless ancient aura.

The sky went dim, the lands were cast into darkness, and the winds stilled. The entire world seemed to be having the light and color sucked out of it by the hand, infected by its aura of death.

The withered hand's skin had blotches and bruises on it, as though it were difficult for the blood to pump through the veins therein. A faint stench of decay emanated off of it, which filled the area.

The area around it seemed to be another world, a world in which that hand was like an Immortal Divinity. All it had to do was wave a finger, and all life could be taken away.

The hand appeared so quickly that nobody had time to react. However, this was the grand coronation of the Clan Chief. How could Fang Xiufeng and everyone else, even the ordinary clan members, not be prepared for unexpected circumstances?

After all... because of Planet South Heaven's spell formation, even Dao Realm experts who came here had to lower themselves to the great circle of the Ancient Realm. However, Quasi-Dao cultivators... existed in the longevity-limited area between the Ancient and Dao Realms, and therefore didn't need to reduce their cultivation bases. Planet South Heaven's spell formation would do nothing against such people.

For example, had Fang Xiufeng failed in his attempt to step into the Dao, even if the South Heaven Death Formation didn't approve of him, the net of destruction wouldn't appear.

Fang Shoudao, Fang Yanxu and Fang Xiufeng all flew out to try to pull Meng Hao back. However, Meng Hao had already made a different decision. He looked coldly at the incoming hand, and then spoke the

words 'South Heaven Death Formation.' In that instant, massive rumbling echoed out through the lands.

An indescribable aura suddenly rose up from the ground, the air, the mountains, the rivers, the seas, the plants and vegetation, from Planet South Heaven itself. The aura exploded out everywhere. It felt like a wellspring of killing intent!

As the killing intent converged, it covered over Planet South Heaven, becoming... an enormous illusory net!

It was none other than... the South Heaven Death Formation!

It seemed to appear slowly, but in actuality it happened in almost the exact same moment that Meng Hao spoke out the four words. Apparently... he could control the formation!

It was a development that left even Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu astonished and in a state of disbelief. Fang Xiufeng's eyes went wide, as did the eyes of all the other members of the Fang Clan. As for the cultivators from the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who had come to offer congratulations, their hearts trembled, and they gasped.

"That's the South Heaven Death Formation?"

"What indestructible power! That formation can wipe out anything... This South Heaven Death Formation is amazing. But... why can Meng Hao summon it?"

"How could this be happening? Don't tell me that Meng Hao can actually control the South Heaven Death Formation?!"

Right now, all minds were reeling because of the shocking events which they were witnessing. Meng Hao hovered there in midair, surrounded by the swirling killing intent of the South Heaven Death Formation. However... considering that he was at the very center of it all, it almost seemed true... that he could actually control the South Heaven Death Formation!

Being able to control the Death Formation meant that he could control

Planet South Heaven! And that meant... that on Planet South Heaven, he was invincible!!

Some distance away in the Imperial palace of the Great Tang, Emperor Tang stood in the main hall, looking off into the distance. He was shocked, but after a moment of thought, he shook his head. Even back when Meng Hao had slipped into a coma, he had been able to detect that he had the approval of the South Heaven Death Formation. As far as Fang Xiufeng went, the formation was tentative about not killing him. But Meng Hao, who had been so willing to sacrifice himself for his father... gained its complete and utter approval!

It was as if Meng Hao's actions in saving his father had moved some ancient Li Clan ancestor within the South Heaven Death Formation.... As such, the entire spell formation approved of him to the point that it would listen to his commands.

Something else happened in that same moment. In a stretch of barren mountains in the Eastern Lands, Shui Dongliu was walking up a path cut into a cliff. He suddenly stopped in place and looked up into the sky.

"People who change their destiny...." he murmured, his eyes gleaming with anticipation. Smiling, he continued on walking.

All of the cultivators in attendance at the Fang Clan's coronation ceremony were completely shaken at what was happening up above.

The enormous illusory net covered Meng Hao, making him shine with resplendent light, as if he represented Heaven and Earth.

The withered hand was also shocked, and began to shake. Without the slightest hesitation, the hand pulled back. It even started to fade, as if it wanted to get away from Planet South Heaven as quickly as possible, and didn't dare to get any closer to Meng Hao.

"You're not going anywhere," Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his hand, instantly causing the enormous illusory net to shine radiantly. The light seemed to seal everything, and a miserable scream echoed out into the air. Not too far off in the distance, the air rippled, and a figure appeared.

It was an old man wearing a long black robe. He was surrounded by an aura of death, and as soon as he appeared, the enormous net shot toward him.

Seeing the net closing in on him, the old man threw his head back and let out a piercing howl. Rumbling could be heard as the aura of death grew more explosive. He seemed to age even more, and his legs seemed to be on the verge of transforming into ash.

He was paying a heavy price to unleash incredible power with his cultivation base, which was now so powerful that Heaven and Earth flickered with light. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but then he waved his right hand, causing a single copper coin to fly out of his sleeve.

The copper coin was bright yellow, and had a magical symbol on one side and an Eight Trigrams symbol on the other. As soon as Meng Hao saw it, his eyes widened. He wasn't the only one. Fang Xiufeng gasped, and as for Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu, they had similar reactions.

"The Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree!!" Fang Shoudao said in disbelief.

That is exactly what it was... the Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree from the seventh tribulation of Dao Stepping. Normally it was a force that appeared during the tribulation, and yet here it was in plain sight. The Fang Clan recognized it, and there were people from the other sects and clans who also recognized it. Those people shot to their feet, expressions of shock on their faces. Their eyes instantly began to shine with a strange light that soon transformed into greed.

It didn't matter whether or not the item was real or a fake; its mere appearance instantly shook everyone.

Although everyone could now see exactly what the old man looked like, nobody recognized him. Not a single one of the visiting cultivators from the various sects and clans knew who he was.

Fang Xiufeng frowned; the man was also a stranger to him.

That in itself was an impossibility. In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, it would be inconceivable that a cultivator could progress from the Spirit Realm all the way to the peak of the Ancient Realm in complete anonymity. Even though he had failed in transcending tribulation and ended up as a Quasi-Dao cultivator, such people were also a rarity. There simply had to be people who had previously interacted with him.

Furthermore, the people who would have had dealings with him would be people with profound cultivation bases. He simply couldn't be a nameless, unknown figure. Besides, a Quasi-Dao expert was not the type of person that you could simply ignore or not care about.

And yet, this old man seemed to be a complete stranger to everyone. For a completely unknown Quasi-Dao cultivator to exist was strange enough, but what was even stranger was that he somehow had a Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree coin. That made him not just strange, but extremely mysterious!

Even as all eyes were focused on the Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree, Fang Xiufeng suddenly gave a cold snort. Eyes icy, he spoke in a sinister voice, "So it turns out to be old bastard Shangguan. We fought years ago in the Ruins of Immortality, and I crippled your cultivation base. How could I ever have imagined that, not only would you have come across the good fortune to restore your cultivation base, but you would also experience Dao Stepping Tribulation. Too bad you failed, and now your longevity is at its end.... Hao'er, this guy and I had an undying enmity years ago that still remains irreconcilable. Why don't you kill him for me!"

As soon as his voice rang out, everyone's eyes widened in shock. However, inwardly, people began to curse. From what they could tell, Fang Xiufeng had seen the Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree, and assumed people would try to snatch it, so he made up a story to prevent that from happening.

Of course, nobody could give voice to such suspicions. After all, it appeared as if this old man really had come with the purpose of going after Fang Xiufeng.

The old man threw his head back and roared, raising both hands into the air. The copper coin that was the Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree suddenly flew through the air up toward the giant net.

The old man's cultivation base surged with full power, creating a maelstrom of death that swept everything out of his way as he shot up toward the net, as if to escape Planet South Heaven.

As long as he could get away from Planet South Heaven, then the South Heaven Death Formation wouldn't be able to kill him. After all, his longevity might be limited, but he actually had some secret magic that would enable him to live on a bit longer.

"Mountain Ghost!!

"Thunder and Lightning!!

"Ghost Slaying!!

"Spirit Subduing!!" In the moment that the copper coin slammed into the huge illusory net, the old man roared. He was now at the ultimate peak of what he could manage. The copper coin flashed with bright yellow light, and suddenly, the awe-inspiring image of a Mountain Ghost appeared, stretching its hands out toward the huge net. Lightning crackled around it as it roared and charged the net.

The instant they contacted each other, a massive rumbling filled Heaven and Earth. The power of lightning transformed into a 30,000-meter Lightning Dragon which tore a huge hole into the net.

The sight shocked even Meng Hao, and Emperor Tang's pupils constricted. It wasn't that the South Heaven Death Formation was weak, but rather... that the Mountain Ghost Lightning Decree was an item from legend, with inexhaustible power.

Most important was that although Meng Hao could control the spell formation, he wasn't as skilled at doing so as Emperor Tang, and couldn't unleash its full potential.

The old man roared, transforming into a beam of light that shot toward the tear in the net.

With a cold harrumph, Meng Hao lifted his right hand up toward him and made a grasping motion.

Instantly, the South Heaven Death Formation radiated scintillating light, which converged into the shape of a huge hand that crushed down toward the old man with fear-inspiring destructive power. The old man's eyes filled with despair as he roared again, burning more of his life force to unleash greater cultivation base power to fight back against the hand.

However, he was like a moth flying into a flame. In the blink of an eye, the hand grabbed ahold of him and crushed him to death. A bloodcurdling scream echoed out as he was destroyed in body and spirit. However, in the moment before he passed into death, he suddenly let out a venomous shout.

“Fang Clan... you people... will never become an Allheaven Clan!”

Chapter 1193: Don't Dare to Fight?

All Heaven and Earth shook. The old man's voice echoed about, filled with venomous hatred. Although most people didn't understand what an Allheaven Clan was, the Three Churches and Six Sects, as well as certain other groups, were completely shocked, and looked over at the Fang Clan.

“Allheaven... Clan?”

Even as they looked over in astonishment, the enormous illusory net vanished, and Meng Hao shot up into the sky. His goal was clear; the shining yellow copper coin, which was now masterless, and slowly beginning to fall out of the sky.

He moved with incredible speed, and yet there were others in the crowd who also shot upward with lightning quickness. There were nine of them, all of whom headed directly toward the copper coin!

But then, six of those people suddenly changed directions and headed toward Meng Hao instead of the copper coin, apparently with the intention of blocking his path.

The other three pushed even faster toward the copper coin.

Fang Xiufeng's face was calm. Next to him were Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu, neither of whom did anything. All of them had complete confidence in Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes shone coldly. The old man he had just killed with the help of the South Heaven Death Formation had been targeting the Fang Clan, so therefore, he intended to keep the copper coin as a battle trophy.

As he flashed through the air, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Then he waved his hand, causing numerous Immortal mountains to descend, surrounded by boundless azure light. Of the group of six, three coughed up blood and immediately slowed down. The other three unleashed divine abilities and magical techniques. Instantly, the sky filled with splendid, multi-colored light, and the ripples of magic.

Dozens of enormous black lizards materialized, which roared as they

charged toward Meng Hao. There was also a gigantic whip that slashed toward him like a dragon.

Last was a seven-colored rainbow, which emanated brilliant light that covered all Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao snorted coldly and pressed forward, relying on the strength of his fleshly body to meet the divine abilities. Both hands stretched out in front of him and ripped to either side, causing the enormous black lizards to let out miserable screams as they were ripped to shreds.

Without even slowing down, Meng Hao waved his right hand, grabbing the illusory whip and sending flame out to engulf it. In the blink of an eye, the whip became a writhing serpent of fire.

Then, Meng Hao slammed into the rainbow, shattering it into countless fragments!

It all happened so quickly that Meng Hao didn't even slow down. He was now directly in front of the three cultivators who had just launched the divine abilities. Their faces flickered with disbelief, and before they could unleash more magic, Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing a tempest to sweep over them.

Blood sprayed out of their mouths as Meng Hao passed them by. He didn't kill them; today was the day his father became the Clan Chief, so unless it was absolutely necessary, he wouldn't kill anyone the way he had during the challenges earlier. He didn't want to turn the occasion into a massacre.

A moment later, he was in front of the copper coin. As he reached out to grab it, the other three cultivators closed in, performing incantation gestures and sending out powerful attacks to block Meng Hao.

One of them summoned an enormous silver-colored bottle gourd that shot toward Meng Hao, emanating a powerful gravitational force as well as shocking screams that echoed in Meng Hao's ears and mind.

"Screw off!" he said, clenching his left hand into a fist and punching out with the power of God-Slaying. The silver gourd trembled and then

exploded into pieces, scattering the vengeful ghosts that had been contained inside of it. The resulting backlash slammed into the cultivator who had launched the divine ability.

His face fell as the vengeful ghosts slammed into him. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his body withered as he tumbled backward. One of his fellows snorted coldly, ignoring the copper coin and shooting toward Meng Hao, eyes blazing as he burned his life force.

He was harming himself and even his cultivation base to prevent Meng Hao from taking the copper coin. The burning turned into the power of self-detonation, causing all faces to fill with shock as the man exploded.

It was like a sun detonating, causing blinding light to stab out in all directions. Meng Hao didn't retreat. Face cold, he waved his finger toward the expanding power of self-detonation.

“Demon Sealing, Fifth Hex!”

Inside Outside Hex!

Back when Meng Hao had acquired this Hex, his cultivation base had been too weak to fully unleash it. But now he had the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, and could use it in its strongest form.

A moment later, a huge rift appeared in front of him that looked like a gigantic mouth. It emanated an indescribably powerful gravitational force that sucked in the self-detonation power.

It happened with incredible speed. One moment, everyone could sense the power of the self-detonation, the next moment, it was gone.

Everyone stared in shock as they realized that there were now only two people near the copper coin: Meng Hao, and another middle-aged cultivator in a black robe.

The man was staring at Meng Hao, eyes wide with fear. He could never have imagined that so many people wouldn't even be able to slow Meng Hao down. Now there were only two of them vying for the coin.

Two hands reached out simultaneously to grab it!

The middle-aged man's eyes flickered as the aura of Karma suddenly emanated out from him. Instead of reaching out with his hand, countless Karma Threads shot out, swirling around him and then snaking toward the copper coin to entangle it.

"Ji Clan...." said Meng Hao, his eyes gleaming with killing intent. This middle-aged man had a cultivation base in the great circle of the Ancient Realm, but because of the bizarre nature of Ji Clan divine abilities, his power surpassed that of other people in the same Realm as him.

"That thing belongs to me!" the man cried out in a domineering voice. His Karma Threads latched onto the copper coin and jerked it toward him.

"Dog fart of a Ji Clan!" Meng Hao roared. Azure light exploded off of him. He didn't need to perform any incantation gestures; his magic responded to his very will. The azure light transformed into an illusory blade that instantly slashed toward the Ji Clan cultivator and his Karma Threads.

In the blink of an eye, the Karma Threads were sliced in two. Blood sprayed out of the man's mouth, and his body withered. At the same time, Meng Hao grabbed the copper coin.

Without even looking at it, he branded it with divine sense and then tossed it into his bag of holding. Then he spun, hovering in midair as he stared coldly at the Ji Clan cultivator.

The man's face flickered as he glared back at Meng Hao. Then he snorted and started to back up.

"Did I say you could leave?!" Meng Hao said, flashing in the man's direction and waving his right finger. The air distorted, and the sky dimmed as the area surrounding the man began to collapse.

The man's face flickered, and he bit his tongue, spitting out a mouthful of blood to unleash a secret magic, barely allowing him to escape the attack. Enraged, he cried out, "What do you think you're doing, Meng Hao!? You really dare to try to kill me?"

Down below, the other cultivators from the Ji Clan looked on with

tranquil expressions. None of them seemed worried about what was happening at all, as if they were certain that Meng Hao wouldn't dare to kill a Ji Clan cultivator in front of so many witnesses.

Meng Hao's expression was very solemn as he said, "Today is my dad's coronation as Clan Chief, and yet some villains showed up and tried to sow chaos. Even though I've killed them already, I'm still convinced that they were acting on the orders of someone else! A conspiracy!"

"If it weren't for that, how would a trifling Quasi-Dao cultivator ever dare come and do such shocking things in my house?" Even as he spoke, he began to advance toward the Ji Clan cultivator.

"I'm investigating this matter on behalf of the Fang Clan, which requires a thorough examination of this copper coin and its origins. And yet you... actually tried to stop me!?"

"Not only that, you fought me over the item! Why might that be? Could it be... that the Ji Clan is behind the conspiracy? Now that the Quasi-Dao cultivator is dead, you're worried that the Fang Clan might uncover the truth, and therefore wanted to get your hands on the evidence!"

"Isn't that true?!" Meng Hao spoke quickly and without pause, and with increasing intensity so that by the end he was practically bellowing. His words became like an explosion of thunder, after which he closed in on the man and unleashed a punch.

The Ji Clan cultivator's face fell, and he fought back with all his power. However, blood sprayed out of his mouth as he fell back. At the same time, the Ji Clan cultivators down below rose to their feet and looked up coldly at Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao, cease this slander!" the man cried. "The Ji Clan had nothing to do with what happened. And even if we did, we wouldn't need to hide the truth!"

"Oh? Oh, I understand. It wasn't the Ji Clan; it was just you acting alone! So, you're the person behind it all!"

"What gall, you traitor! You wish to provoke the Fang Clan and Ji Clan

into a war! I'm going to kill you right here and now, as a warning to anyone who dares to try to incite strife between the Fang and Ji Clans!!" Eyes flashing, Meng Hao shot forward. Faces falling, the other Ji Clan cultivators present were about to block him, but then Meng Hao extended his hand and unleashed the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex.

This time, it was not the Inside aspect, but the Outside aspect. A massive force exploded out, which was none other than the massively destructive self-detonation power from moments ago. Heaven and Earth distorted as the middle-aged cultivator was engulfed.

Before, the explosion's energies were directed outwards in all directions. But now, it was being focused completely on the Ji Clan cultivator by means of the Fifth Hex.

The man couldn't even fight back. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he was instantly killed in body and soul.

"Meng Hao!!" cried the other Ji Clan cultivators, several of whom flew up into the air, but were intercepted by members of the Fang Clan.

"Fellow Daoists of the Ji Clan, there's no need to offer me thanks. I really had no choice but to help you. This man dared to incite violence between our two clans, and thus deserved to die!" Smiling, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed to the members of the Ji Clan.

Chapter 1194: Cutting Them Down!

Most of the members of the Ji Clan were old, but one appeared to be a young man of about thirty years of age. He wore ordinary clothing, nothing extravagant, and yet all the other Ji Clan cultivators seemed to be following his lead.

Without looking closely, that fact would never be obvious. In fact, he even stood towards the rear, making him seem like nothing other than an ordinary clan member.

However, while the other clan members were crying out in rage, he was doing nothing more than frowning. That in itself made him stand out to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked over at him with a slight smile, as if nothing were out of the ordinary. However, deep in his heart was icy coldness; the killing intent he felt towards the Ji Clan had long since become extremely intense.

If it weren't for the fact that he wasn't confident in the Fang Clan's ability to achieve complete victory against the Ji Clan, Meng Hao would have already begun to slaughter them. However, even though he was currently holding himself back, he would strike decisively whenever he had the opportunity to do so.

"Fellow Daoists of the Ji Clan, are you saying that I killed the wrong person?" he asked, sounding perplexed. "Why are you so angry? He was clearly trying to harm the relationship between our two clans!" The coldness in his heart grew more intense; if the Ji Clan attempted to argue with him, then he would simply use it as a reason to attack and kill someone else!

The Ji Clan cultivators glared back at him furiously, but in this case, there was no logical argument that could be used against the Fang Clan. If the circumstances were different, the Ji Clan might be able to disregard that, but on this day, during the coronation of the Fang Clan's Clan Chief, they had only two choices. One was to start a full-scale war with the Fang

Clan, and the other... was simply to accept the situation.

After all, they truly had been trying to steal the copper coin!

The Ji Clan was domineering in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, a fact known by all the cultivators there. Therefore, many of their cultivators simply couldn't tolerate Meng Hao's words, and one of them was even about to open their mouth to fire back a rebuke. However, the frowning young man standing off to the side looked deeply at Meng Hao and then smiled.

"Many thanks for your reminder, Fellow Daoist Meng. Earlier, I truly seem to have overlooked that that man had such ulterior motives." The young man's voice wasn't very loud, but it contained an inherent power and dignity. He swished his sleeve, and immediately, all of the Ji Clan backed down.

Everything that was happening immediately made the young man completely conspicuous among the other Ji Clan cultivators. Now, instead of seeming completely ordinary, he seemed the exact opposite.

All of the cultivators from the other sects and powers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were now staring at him and speculating about his identity.

"Could it be that he's this generation's mysterious, never-before-seen... Son of Ji? Ji Dongyang?"

Fang Xiufeng, Fang Shoudao and the others also looked thoughtfully at the young Ji Clan cultivator. Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking into the young man's eyes. Meng Hao's gaze burst with killing intent for a brief moment, after which the young man staggered backward, the blood draining from his face and his eyes widening.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, although a tremor ran through his body. After returning to Fang Xiufeng's side, he suddenly made a decision.

Ji Tian wants to kill my dad, so therefore... I'm going to kill this young man!

In that instant, the young man's heart trembled. From Meng Hao's eyes, it was possible to tell how incredibly strong he was, and the intense killing intent within the gaze had forced the young man backward. Turning to his fellow clan members, he growled, "Let's go. We're leaving Planet South Heaven!"

In response to his words, the other members of the Ji Clan began to unleash the power of their cultivation bases. As they clustered around the young man, one of their members, an older man, clasped hands toward Fang Xiufeng.

"Fellow Daoist Xiufeng, congratulations on becoming the Clan Chief of the Fang Clan. We have an urgent matter to attend to, so we'll take our leave now!" Without even waiting for a response from Fang Xiufeng, the man flew into the air, followed by the young cultivator and all the other members of the Ji Clan. All of them transformed into prismatic beams of light that shot up into the sky.

"Dad, Patriarch Shoudao, Patriarch Yanxu," Meng Hao said quietly, "I'm feeling a bit under the weather. Since nobody else will be offering any challenges, I'm going to go rest." Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu exchanged a hesitating glance. Considering their intelligence and cultivation bases, it wasn't difficult for them to guess what Meng Hao was planning to do.

Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu were hesitating, but Fang Xiufeng looked up and said, "Health comes first. Go ahead."

His eyes flickered with killing intent. He was not the type of person who was willing to let others get the best of him, and thanks to Meng Hao, he was now certain that his previous difficulties in stepping into the Dao had something to do with the Ji Clan.

Meng Hao was his son, and he knew him well enough to know that he wasn't an impulsive person. Therefore, Fang Xiufeng supported his decision, both as his father and as the Clan Chief.

Meng Hao nodded, then shot up into the air in a streak of light.

The coronation ceremony for the Clan Chief continued. After what had

just happened, no one challenged Fang Xiufeng to fight. However, observant people noticed that up in the sky, a mass of dark clouds had appeared at some point.

Apparently, the weather was changing. Rain began to fall, and clouds roiled out to cover the whole sky. If you looked up, you would see that the entire sky had been obscured, almost as if a spell formation were sealing everything.

At the same time, the same dozen or so Ji Clan cultivators were flying through the layers of clouds. Lightning crashed and boomed around them as they flew upward.

“Young Lord, why are we rushing to leave? Even though they killed one of our Ji Clan’s cultivators, they still need to try to maintain the moral high ground! There’s no way they would dare to openly start attacking all of us, is there?! That Meng Hao must be killed sooner or later!”

A few of them began to make sneering comments. “That’s right, if they dared to attack us in the open, our Patriarch’s eye would certainly see it! He can see everything in the Ninth Mountain and Sea! Even if the Fang Clan were more foolhardy than they already are, they still wouldn’t dare to make a move on us!”

“That Meng Hao really does defy laws and principles, even of the Heavens,” one of the older cultivators said, snorting coldly. “It’s too bad there were so many other cultivators present, plus the Fang Clan backing him up. Otherwise, if he dared to act so audaciously, we would have just cut him down. He got lucky this time. Just wait until next time, when there aren’t any members from other sects or clans around, we’ll definitely exterminate him!”

“Would you shut the hell up!” the young cultivator said, looking around at the clouds. “Do you really think Meng Hao didn’t consider all of that? You think that the other sects and powers made it so we couldn’t attack him? You think Meng Hao got off lightly? Well from my perspective, those people actually saved us!”

“Consider the matter dropped. Let’s get out of Planet South Heaven.

Dammit... I can't believe Meng Hao can actually control the South Heaven Death Formation!" The other cultivators followed along quietly, although none of them agreed with his decision.

They were the Ji Clan, and after all these years, they had grown used to being above everyone else. No matter where they went in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, all they had to do was reveal that they were from the Ji Clan, and everyone would instantly act very respectfully and even shake in fear. After all, the Ji Clan was the Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

With a position and standing like that, they never really needed to spend much time thinking about anything in any situation. They always viewed themselves as the strongest party, like Emperors. As such, why would they need to spend time considering the common people?

The young cultivator looked at his companions and sighed inwardly with remorse. He was well aware that the members of the Ji Clan were too used to being in a superior position, and had lost their ability to sense danger.

It was at this moment that they emerged from the cloud layer, and found themselves at the very edges of the skies above Planet South Heaven, just a short distance away from the void of space. Suddenly, the young man saw something which caused his pupils to constrict.

"Meng Hao!!"

He wasn't the only surprised one. The other Ji Clan cultivators' faces fell as they caught sight of Meng Hao, standing in the air above them, eyes shining coldly, lightning crackling and crashing around him.

Voice cool, he said, "Now that nobody's around to stop me... I'm going to cut down some Ji Clan cultivators!"

Lightning crashed and danced in all directions.

Meng Hao extended his hand and pushed it down toward South Heaven. Rumbling sounds echoed out as, all of a sudden, a huge illusory net appeared around him, which was none other than the South Heaven Death Formation.

The Death Formation net rapidly transformed into a huge hand, which

radiated boundless killing intent, causing colors to flash and thunder to boom.

The young Ji Clan cultivator's face flickered, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. He roared as innumerable shocking Karma Threads appeared around him, transforming into innumerable magical items that shone with dazzling light and shot toward the hand. Simultaneously, killing intent began to roil off of all the other Ji Clan cultivators, and the dozen or so of them joined together in unleashing their entire cultivation bases to defend against the hand.

When the magical techniques and divine abilities, as well as the magical items, slammed into the huge hand formed by the spell formation, they were completely powerless. They shattered into nothing, crushed like dried weeds by the spell formation hand. Rumbling echoed out as the hand then slammed into the Ji Clan cultivators.

Almost instantly, three of their number screamed and exploded into pieces, transforming into a rain of blood that fell down through the clouds.

“Meng Hao, how dare you kill Ji Clan cultivators! Our Patriarch is going to slaughter you!!” In the following instant, another three Ji Clan cultivators were killed. Blood sprayed out of their mouths, and they exploded.

The cries they let out before dying never went beyond the clouds, nor did they echo out into space. Down below, the only thing people could hear was thunder.

“Ji Tian doesn't dare to come to Planet South Heaven!” Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his right hand, causing boundless lightning to crackle within the clouds. There was so much lightning that it seemed as if the entire world were composed of nothing else, except for a few miserable screams interspersed between the booming thunder.

The hand materialized by the South Heaven Death Formation was like Heavenly Tribulation from Planet South Heaven, something that could extinguish all life!

And Meng Hao could control the South Heaven Death Formation. That mean that on Planet South Heaven he... was exactly as powerful as Emperor Tang! Unsurpassable!

Chapter 1195: Eighth Life!

“Patriarch, save me!!” One of the old Ji Clan cultivators screamed as he went all-out trying to fight against the spell formation hand. However, all his magical techniques fell to pieces, and he was torn to shreds, causing blood to rain down into the clouds below.

The illusory hand burst with the power of extermination. Lightning crashed and exploded, becoming the only sound in Heaven and Earth.

A middle-aged Ji Clan cultivator, eyes bloodshot, performed an incantation gesture that caused numerous magical items to fly out of his bag of holding. However, the hand shattered them all. Blood sprayed from the man’s mouth, splattering back onto his face. He screamed as he was destroyed, completely shredded into nothing.

Two more Ji Clan cultivators performed incantation gestures, summoning magical techniques and Karma Threads. In the blink of an eye, their Karma was destroyed, and then the hand completely wiped them out.

“Patriarch, save us!!” Miserable screams echoed out, filled with astonishment and dread. Unfortunately for them, the screams were completely drowned out by the lightning.

Everything happened very quickly. Although it takes some time to describe, Meng Hao’s single explosive attack with the South Heaven Death Formation... instantly killed almost all of the dozen or so Ji Clan cultivators.

A moment later, only two were left. One was the young man, and the other was the Elder who had been in the leadership position of this group that had come to Planet South Heaven. They immediately fell back, avoiding death for the moment. However, the hand continued to rumble toward them with unbelievable speed.

“Meng Hao,” the old man roared, “is your Fang Clan trying to start a war with the Ji Clan!?!?” He waved his hand, causing cultivation base power to erupt into a windstorm that rumbled so loudly it vied with the thunder.

Meng Hao's face was icy cold as he shoved his hand down. More rumbling could be heard as the spell formation's hand crushed down through the clouds toward the two remaining cultivators.

Blood sprayed out of the old man's mouth, and a look of despair covered his face as he began to collapse. In the moment before he shattered, the young man flickered into place behind him and pushed down onto his back.

"Since you're going to die... you might as well help me!" the young man murmured.

RUMBLE!

The enormous hand continued to surge through the clouds, causing them to seethe and churn. By now, the sound had reached the ears of the cultivators down below, who heard a shocking rumbling.

They could also see the clouds shaking. Massive amounts of lightning crackled about as if they had been squeezed out of the sponge-like clouds, falling from the clouds like silver dragons.

Given that even the lightning had been forcibly expelled, huge bean-sized drops of rain also began to pour down onto the lands beneath.

However, what no one noticed was that some of that rain was the color of blood. That was because... it wasn't rain at all, but blood, the blood of the Ji Clan! However, there was no life within that blood, and the amount was miniscule, as if the vast majority of it had been swallowed up by the clouds themselves.

What nobody down below could see was that, somewhere within the dark clouds, a blood-colored figure sat cross-legged in meditation, surrounded by a cloud of the blood that had disappeared, which it was constantly consuming.

If you looked closely, that blood-colored figure was emanating the Karmic aura of the Ji Clan, as well as a faint, murderous aura.

This was Meng Hao's Blood Clone!

It had been years since Meng Hao's cultivation base had grown so powerful that the Blood Clone was essentially useless, and had remained tucked away in his bag of holding. He had even given up on the idea of turning it into a Blood Divinity. 1

Then Ji Tian had gone and tried to kill his father, which stoked Meng Hao's killing intent and rage to the point where he decided to collect more generations of Ji Clan blood and continue his plan to build his Blood Divinity, which would have the power of Ancestral Awakening.

Thus, less blood fell down among the rain than would be expected, and what fell was in fact diluted to the point that no one could see it. In fact, only a single drop landed on the face of one of the cultivators down below, who looked up in shock after wiping it away.

Back up in the clouds and lightning, Meng Hao extended his right hand, causing the spell formation's hand to gradually disperse, leaving behind a huge handprint within the clouds.

One palm had killed the Ji Clan cultivators as if they were ants!

Although that power did not come from Meng Hao himself, at this moment he felt a sort of mightiness that could only come after one possessed the power to control Heaven and Earth, the kind of domineering feeling that came from being matchless in all of creation.

As the hand faded away, two people became visible within the handprint that was left behind. It was none other than the two people who hadn't been killed!

Of course, it would be most correct to say that it was one person, not two!

The old man's aura was no longer present. A huge hole was now visible in his back, and it was possible to see that no organs existed inside of his body. He was an empty husk, inside of which the young man was concealed!

Clearly, he hadn't simply hidden inside the man, but used some sort of sinister secret magic to avoid being killed by the enormous net.

Cracking sounds could be heard as the husk of the old man fell into pieces. The young man staggered back, coughing up blood. At the same time, countless Karma Threads exploded out of him, filling the area and transforming into what looked like a teleportation spell formation.

The blood spraying from his mouth fell down through the clouds to be sucked towards and voraciously consumed by the Blood Clone which was hidden there.

Of course, the young man had no idea about the Blood Clone. Even as his body began to fade, Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph.

“You’re not going anywhere!” he said, advancing, hand clenching into a fist. He punched out, causing the air to distort. However, as he closed in on the young man, Meng Hao suddenly felt a sense of crisis, and it was in that moment that the young man smiled eerily.

“You... finally got close,” he murmured. Instead of dodging out of the way of Meng Hao’s fist, he actually charged directly forward to meet it.

Rumbling could be heard as the young man’s body was shattered, causing blood and gore to spray out in all directions. However, his laughter continued to echo out in the air.

“Meng Hao, our Karma has been tied. Next time we meet... what’s yours will be mine. Remember our shared name. We are called... Ji Dongyang!” Wild laughter echoed out as the young man’s body faded away.

Meng Hao hovered there, frowning. Finally, he looked down thoughtfully at his fist and sighed.

“I wanted to kill him, but apparently, that was part of his plan....

“What a clever fellow, this Ji Dongyang. All of the Ji Clan cultivators he brought with him were being used as a smokescreen.

“And the entire reason why he dared to come to Planet South Heaven was to use a Ji Clan secret magic to bind me with Karma, and in turn unleash some sort of mysterious Daoist magic.

“I was luring him into a trap, and he was doing the same to me.... He

didn't want to be killed by the South Heaven Death Formation, he wanted to be killed by me personally....” Even as he hovered there thinking, the Blood Clone which had been hiding in the clouds below slowly floated up. It was now very different than before, more powerful, and emanating a powerful aura of Ji Clan Karma.

In fact, it even seemed to be poised on the verge of a breakthrough. With a little more progress, it would finally break through and take a step closer to being a Blood Divinity capable of Ancestral Awakening.

“If the Ancestral Awakening occurs, I wonder if... whatever appears will be as powerful as Ji Tian himself!?”

Eyes flickering, he ceased worrying about the matter of Ji Dongyang. All he could do now was be on guard against this new powerful adversary!

After putting his Blood Clone into his bag of holding, he shot back down through the clouds.

Meanwhile, in the Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain, there was a restricted area that was a graveyard. Nine coffins were lined up there, all of them bronze and carved with complicated magical symbols.

Seven of those coffins had no lids, and were empty. Only the eighth and ninth coffins were closed tightly.

Suddenly, powerful rumbling like that of thunder could be heard, and the lid of the eighth coffin opened with a bang. A powerful aura immediately surged out from within.

A hand stretched up from inside the eighth coffin. At first, it was trembling, but then it grew steady and grabbed the side of the coffin. A person slowly sat up, then stood. His body was shriveled, like a corpse, so desiccated that it was difficult to make out his facial features.

A mark could be seen on his forehead, and despite the withered nature of his body, that mark was clearly visible. Unexpectedly, it was... an Echelon mark!!

Shockingly, this man... was an Echelon cultivator!

He took a breath, sucking in all the energy of Heaven and Earth in the area. As he did, his body rapidly regenerated. His blood and flesh wriggled, and life flooded back into him as he rapidly transformed back into a young man!

His facial features slowly filled back in, and in the end... a face appeared which no one had ever seen before!

“I still... prefer the appearance of my seventh life,” he said in a raspy voice. “He was my favorite among the Junior generation.” Then the face rapidly changed, transforming into... Ji Dongyang!

“The Karma has been bound, and my eighth life body has been awakened. I’ve also secured the host for my ninth life. Meng Hao..... Once we share the same body... then you will be my ninth life!” Ji Dongyang began to laugh, a strange and sinister laughter filled with an ancient air.

He looked up, and shockingly, a huge eye appeared up above him, within which sat an old man. The two of them looked at each other.

The most eerie thing was that if there were a third person present to observe the scene, they would find that the look in the old man’s eyes, and the look in Ji Dongyang’s eyes...

Were exactly the same!!

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1. I didn’t have time to link to all the previous relevant chapters with the Blood Clone. If I recall correctly, the last time it appeared was in the battle for the Southern Domain. I did pull up a chapter where the Blood Divinity was mentioned, [chapter 265](#).

Chapter 1196: Taking Away the Terracotta Soldier!

The rest of the coronation of the Clan Chief came to a conclusion without a hitch. All sects and powers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea would henceforth treat Fang Xiufeng with incredible politeness. After all, Fang Xiufeng now represented the entire Fang Clan!

Large numbers of Fang Clan cultivators were stationed on Planet South Heaven, and permanent teleportation portals were set up, linking it directly to Planet East Victory.

This also meant that it was no longer just Fang Xiufeng who stood guard over Planet South Heaven. It became the responsibility of the whole Fang Clan, including Fang Shoudao and Fang Yanxu, and no one shirked their duty.

Protect the Mountain and Sea Realm! That... was the oath of the Allheaven Clans!

Three days after the ceremony was over, Meng Hao bid farewell to his parents and left Planet South Heaven. He wasn't sure when he would be back in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, so he decided that he should go see some of his old friends before leaving. Some he would visit to reminisce. Others he would visit to collect money!

His first stop would be Planet East Victory!

He made use of the teleportation portal on Planet South Heaven to travel directly there. On his way to the ancestral mansion, he stopped by the Dao of Alchemy Division to pay respects to Pill Elder and visit some old friends. Then, he and Fang Shoudao opened up the clan's Ancestral Land!

He stood there looking at the enormous vortex, and the familiar Ancestral Land therein. His heart trembled as he saw the terracotta soldier in the form of a mountain, and couldn't help but think of Ke Yunhai.

"Dad...." he murmured. He stepped forward into the vortex and appeared in front of the terracotta soldier. It was currently sleeping, but as soon as

he appeared, its aura awakened, and it slowly opened its eyes. Rumbling echoed out as it rose to its feet, and the power of a Quasi-Dao cultivation base erupted out.

It had been waiting this entire time for Meng Hao to come and take it away!

The day had finally come!

“I’m going to take you away,” Meng Hao said. “You’re going to be with me... for all eternity.” He slowly lifted his hand and patted the terracotta soldier as its aura caused memories of Stepdad Ke to swirl in his head.

“There’s another terracotta soldier out there somewhere, and I’m going to get that one back too.” He took a deep breath and then waved his hand. The terracotta soldier instantly transformed into a beam of light that flew into the piece of the Ruins of Immortality that he’d acquired from Paragon Sea Dream!

The terracotta soldier had long since become connected inseparably with the Ruins of Immortality, although not the land itself, but its energy. The entire reason it was unable to leave the Fang Clan Ancestral Land was because without that energy, it would die.

That was the main reason that Meng Hao requested a piece of the Ruins of Immortality from Paragon Sea Dream. It was all... for the terracotta soldier. As the terracotta soldier entered his own piece of the Ruins of Immortality, Meng Hao’s heart began to beat nervously. After all, his whole plan was based on speculation. However, after seeing that the terracotta soldier showed no signs of being unable to adapt, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“From now on we’ll... travel together through the Mountain and Sea Realm!” Next, his eyes began to glow as he looked in the direction of the necropolis far off in the distance and bowed. Just as he was about to leave, the ancient voice of the first generation Patriarch echoed out into his mind.

“The legacy of Lord Li was once on Planet South Heaven. Later it came to Planet East Victory. And now... it’s in the Eighth Mountain and Sea.” As

the voice echoed out, a jade slip flew out of the necropolis to appear in front of Meng Hao. He reached out and took it.

“This jade slip shows the current location of the legacy of Lord Li. With this, you should be able to track it down!

“The legacy was originally intended for someone in the Dao Realm. However, considering your current cultivation base, you can still... find and acquire the legacy. It... will be of great help to you.” The longer the first generation Patriarch spoke, the weaker his voice got.

Meng Hao sent some divine sense into the jade slip, and could immediately sense something calling to him through the starry sky. It was faint, but he was now sure that if he went looking, he would be able to find the source of that call.

What he found strange was that the location of Lord Li’s legacy was not fixed within the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Instead, it seemed to be moving.

“Planet South Heaven. Planet East Victory. The Eighth Mountain....” Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he made a sudden, wild speculation.

“No way....” he murmured.

Meanwhile, in the starry sky of the Eighth Mountain and Sea, a gargantuan turtle was flying along happily, humming a little tune, surrounded by hundreds of tough-looking cultivators who were apparently guards.

As they flew along with the turtle, they cried out in loud voices:

“The Patriarch is mighty, Reliance is mighty!”

“The Patriarch is invincible, Reliance is invincible!”

Their voices echoed out in powerful sound waves, spreading out in all directions. Any cultivators who encountered them were immediately shocked.

Of course, this turtle was none other than Patriarch Reliance, who was now as free as a bird, smacking his lips proudly, looking very much at

ease.

“The Eighth Mountain is way better than the Ninth Mountain. No matter where I look, there’s no Meng Hao. Without him, everything is wonderful.” Patriarch Reliance sighed emotionally as he realized that making the decision to flee from the Ninth Mountain and Sea couldn’t have been more right.

“That little bastard Meng Hao wouldn’t imagine in his wildest dreams that I’ll never again be fooling around with him in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Finally I can be footloose and fancy free in the Eighth Mountain and Sea.” Patriarch Reliance was very proud of himself, and loved how the cultivators clustered around him and called him mighty. However, it was at this point that he suddenly shivered out of nowhere.

“Eee? What’s going on? Why do I feel so jittery all of a sudden?” A strange look appeared on Patriarch Reliance’s face for a moment, but he thought little more of it and continued on his merry way.

Back in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao put the jade slip away with a wry expression on his face. Clasp hands to the first generation Patriarch, he then left the Ancestral Land and headed toward the teleportation portal with those speculations running through his mind.

Halfway there, he suddenly turned to find a black-robed cultivator sitting cross-legged on a nearby mountain peak.

Before, this cultivator would wear white, but later, he had become the shadow of the clan, and from then on, wore clothing as black as the night, to indicate how he would eternally exist in the darkness.

It was Fang Wei!

This location was a place that had to be passed by to get to the teleportation portal, and he had been waiting here specifically for Meng Hao.

Their gazes met, and neither said anything at first. A moment passed, and then Meng Hao smiled.

“What is the meaning of your name, Fang Wei?”

A tremor ran through Fang Wei. Meng Hao's question brought back many memories. A bright glow appeared in his eyes. Voice low and filled with determination, he replied, "That I'm going to defend the Fang Clan!" 1

Meng Hao waved his finger, which caused Fang Wei to shake one more time. Suddenly, an intense azure light began to shine off of him.

This was the light of an Allheaven Immortal. The Dao seed inside of him was now mostly awakened, causing his cultivation base to burn with the power of an imminent breakthrough.

Meng Hao's face paled a bit. Smiling, he flew past Fang Wei toward the teleportation portal.

A complicated expression appeared on Fang Wei's face as he sensed his surging cultivation base and the Allheaven Immortal energy inside of himself. As Meng Hao made his way off, just before he disappeared, Fang Wei called out, "Meng Hao, I'll wait for you to get back, and then the two of us are going to fight!"

"Very well!" was the echoing reply. Then Meng Hao disappeared into the teleportation portal in a flash of light.

"Therefore," Fang Wei murmured. "No matter what dangerous situations you run into, make sure to get back safely!" He rose to his feet and headed back in the direction of the Medicine Immortal Sect, eyes gleaming with an unswerving determination to sacrifice anything and everything for the sake of his clan.

Meng Hao stepped out of a shimmering teleportation portal onto an asteroid field somewhere in the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a thick stack of promissory notes.

"So, who should I go collect money from first? Ah, I guess it doesn't matter. I have so many promissory notes I guess I might as well just randomly pick one!" Having made up his mind, he pulled a random note out and looked it over.

"Taiyang Zi?" he said, smiling. "Not bad, not bad. He owes me quite a

few spirit stones.” Face filled with anticipation, he clutched the promissory note in his hand as he shot toward the teleportation portal leading to Mount Sun. As soon as the disciples manning the teleportation portal saw that it was Meng Hao, their faces flickered.

Ignoring them, Meng Hao stepped into the teleportation portal and was surrounded by the glowing light of teleportation.

When he reappeared, he found himself in front of a world of scorching heat. It was like a desert, and there was no starry sky up above; this was its own unique, special world.

The sky was dark, and the lands were parched. Countless mountains could be seen stretching out in all directions, all of which were spontaneously erupting volcanoes. In fact, in the moment that Meng Hao arrived, he saw a dozen or so of them belching out black smoke, and shooting out bright glowing arcs of light that looked almost like meteors.

This was Mount Sun. According to the legends, it was a fragment of lands shattered by the impact of the Immortal World’s sun when it fell from the heavens. Because it was so large, vast amounts of sun power could be found there, which was also why there were so many powerfully destructive volcanoes!

That was also why it became a unique location to practice cultivation. Gradually, it came to be called Mount Sun, and after many years, became one of the Five Great Holy Lands of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

Different teleportation portals could be used to get into and out of Mount Sun, and all of them were manned by Mount Sun disciples. Once Meng Hao appeared, they immediately recognized him.

“That’s Meng Hao!” There were over a hundred disciples in the area of the teleportation portal, and all of them looked at Meng Hao with flickering expressions. Although they weren’t sure why he was here, they immediately pushed down on jade slips to send messages to their superiors.

Meng Hao coughed dryly and glanced around at the Mount Sun disciples, who were acting as though some powerful enemy had just

shown up at their doorstep. Feeling a bit embarrassed, he gave them a bashful smile, then cleared his voice and called out, “Taiyang Zi! You owe me money! Time to pay up!!”

His voice echoed out like thunder, causing wild colors to flash in Heaven and Earth, and a massive wind to spring up. Boundless ripples emanated out and surged through the world.

Some of the volcanoes in the area quaked and then erupted, and the sky darkened as the Heavens shook. Everyone in the entire world could hear Meng Hao’s words.

The Mount Sun disciples stared with wide-open jaws. Mount Sun was immediately thrown into a huge uproar as countless disciples were flabbergasted by Meng Hao’s voice.

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1. In case you forgot, the story of how Fang Wei got his name, and what it means, was in chapter 998.

Chapter 1197: Stopping By To Demand Payment!

“Taiyang Zi! You owe me money! Time to pay up!!”

“... You owe me money! Time to pay up!!”

“... Time to pay up!!”

The world in which Mount Sun existed seemed to be filled with countless Meng Haos, all of them shouting out at the same time. The mountains shook and the lands quaked. Countless cultivators were completely shocked.

Most surprising of all were the actual words he spoke....

Almost immediately, hundreds of furious cultivators flew out from one particular mountain deep within the world of Mount Sun.

“Collecting debt?”

“Who dares to cause a ruckus in Mount Sun!?”

“Such audaciousness!”

All of the disciples headed in Meng Hao’s direction. However, before they were even halfway to his location, one cultivator after another recognized who he was, and their faces fell.

“Meng Hao.... Dammit, I can’t believe it’s him! Greedy, miserly Meng Hao!”

“Meng Hao was able to cut down Guru Heavencloud in battle, and also has a despicable Daoist magic that gets people to owe him money. It would be better to die than provoke him!”

“Ahem, well if it isn’t my bro Meng Hao. Ah, misunderstanding, misunderstanding....” Without the slightest hesitation, the group instantly turned on their heels and left.

They recognized him and knew what kind of person he was. He was such a terrifying figure that none of them were willing to stand up for

Taiyang Zi.

Actually, not even Meng Hao himself was aware of how famous he had become in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Virtually all of the cultivators knew him and did their best to avoid him. It was common knowledge that anyone who tangled with him... would end up completely destitute.

Meng Hao's cries continued to echo back and forth in the Holy Land of Mount Sun. Soon, in some of the most ancient volcanoes of Mount Sun, cultivators with the status of Elders, and even Patriarchs, opened their eyes to reveal cold, displeased gazes. These people had extremely high statuses, and had lived for many years. As such, they held no approval for a youngster like Meng Hao.

Meanwhile.... At the bottom of an enormous volcano deep within Mount Sun, a young man sat cross-legged in meditation. He was naked from the waist up, and every inch of his skin glowed bright red. Clearly it contained terrifying power. Bulging blue veins snaked across his skin like dragons, and it seemed like there was some sort of explosive force building up inside him.

On the young man's forehead, a mark could be seen that resembled a sun.

This was none other than... Taiyang Zi!

He was just one of the many Chosen that had emerged in the long history of the Holy Land of Mount Sun. Yet his latent talent was stunning, even more so than all the cultivators who had inherited the name Taiyang Zi before him. In terms of cultivation, he had long since broken through the traditional limitations for cultivators. He was now at the peak of the Immortal Realm, but in truth, he could easily battle the mid Ancient Realm!

Immortals like that were definitely rare in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

As Taiyang Zi sat there cross-legged doing breathing exercises, Meng Hao's voice echoed about like thunder, reaching the depths of the world of Mount Sun. The volcanoes all trembled, erupting with lava and belching out smoke. The sky of Mount Sun quickly turned black.

Taiyang Zi's eyes snapped open as his volcano had a similar reaction.

"Meng Hao!" He gritted his teeth in fury. He would never have imagined that Meng Hao would actually come to Mount Sun and say something like he just had.

To show up in Taiyang Zi's home and openly demand money left him with no face whatsoever. This was especially the case considering that he didn't believe that he actually owed Meng Hao anything. The whole situation had been forced on him. Of course, he couldn't beat Meng Hao in a fight, so he was forced to simply endure the situation. But now, shockingly, Meng Hao had actually come to Mount Sun to settle up.

Taiyang Zi threw his head back and roared. His cultivation base surged with power, and he flew out of the volcano up into the sky, roaring out in an equally thunderous voice, "Meng Hao, you push people too far!!"

From his position just outside the teleportation portal, Meng Hao could hear Taiyang Zi, and his face lit up with delight. What he feared the most was going to collect debts, only to find the person not at home. Now that he knew Taiyang Zi was home, he realized that he was in luck.

Laughing heartily, he took a step forward and transformed into a bright beam of light that shot dazzlingly through the air toward Taiyang Zi. However, even as he closed in, a cold snort echoed out from a nearby volcano, and an enormous hand appeared, which grabbed toward Meng Hao.

"Cease this outburst, child! Get down here!" The sound of the snort echoed about, and the enormous hand blotted out the sky as it crushed down toward Meng Hao. The hand even seemed to influence the natural laws in the area, causing everything to twist and distort.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly. Instead of falling back, he slammed directly into the hand, causing massive rumbling sounds to echo out. The hand collapsed, and Meng Hao remained hovering in midair, completely unharmed.

"Me get down there? How about you come up here!" He extended his right hand and made a grasping motion toward the volcano down below.

The land quaked and the volcano rumbled as a bedraggled figure was wrenched up into the air. It was an old man in the great circle of the Ancient Realm, who looked completely flustered as he glared at Meng Hao. More cold harrumphs could be heard from the surrounding volcanos as four more old men appeared, all of them in the great circle of the Ancient Realm. Their energy surged, creating a spectacular scene as they flew out to suppress Meng Hao.

“Ganging up on me?” Meng Hao said coolly, waving his right hand, which caused the terracotta soldier to emerge from his bag of holding. It instantly grew to a huge size, sweeping its greatsword through the air, destroying a volcano before stabbing into the ground, which then quaked violently.

When the Ancient Realm Mount Sun Elders felt how powerful the attack of the terracotta soldier was, their faces fell and they instantly backed up. Even still, blood sprayed out of their mouths, and shocked expressions appeared on their faces.

“Quasi-Dao!!”

“That’s the guardian of the Fang Clan’s Ancestral Land! It joined the battle when the Ji Clan invaded Planet East Victory!!”

As they backed up, the terracotta soldier looked around, and its energy soared. Rumbling filled the air, and a huge wind sprang up that filled all of Mount Sun with the Quasi-Dao aura of the terracotta soldier.

That aura caused all Mount Sun disciples’ faces to fall, and their bodies to tremble. The mad aura of a Quasi-Dao cultivation base was something they simply couldn’t fight against.

Any Quasi-Dao expert was to be feared. However, what was most terrifying was that even though the terracotta soldier could explode out with Quasi-Dao power... it had no longevity limitations.

Taiyang Zi gasped, and his heart began to thump. He looked at Meng Hao, then at the enormous terracotta soldier, and then he sighed. Finally, he began to back up, and yet, he wasn’t as fast as Meng Hao.

Meng Hao advanced, reaching out to grab ahold of Taiyang Zi.

“Taiyang Zi, you’re going to pay me what you owe, today!!”

“You’re shameless, Meng Hao! I never owed you any money!!” Roaring in fury, Taiyang Zi performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a divine ability to materialize and shoot toward Meng Hao.

“I have proof! Your promissory note is right here! How dare you deny the truth!” Enraged, Meng Hao punched out, sending Taiyang Zi flying back with blood spraying out of his mouth. Meng Hao was just about to follow up with another attack when the voice of an arrogant old man echoed out across the lands.

“Even if your father came here, he would treat me with respect and call me Senior. For you to come to Mount Sun and babble such nonsense might not be a capital offense, but you won’t escape severe punishment.

“I suppose I’ll just stand in for your father to administer some discipline. If we don’t correct that personality of yours, sooner or later you’re going to get yourself killed.” As the voice rang out, an ancient and primeval volcano off in the distance erupted, and countless flickering magical symbols spewed out. A middle-aged man flew out, standing on a stream of smoking lava and a cloud of ash.

When he emerged, the sky churned, and the air around him became a sea of flames which emanated an Essence aura.

This man was none other than one of the three Dao Realm experts of Mount Sun!!

As far as he was concerned, it didn’t matter why Meng Hao was here, he should politely offer his respects and say some pleasantries. If that had been the case, Mount Sun wouldn’t necessarily refuse to hand over some spirit stones to resolve the issue with Taiyang Zi.

However, for Meng Hao to show up and act so tough was simply intolerable. In his mind, even if Meng Hao were stronger than he was, he couldn’t do anything to cultivators in the Dao Realm. Even the things which had happened on Planet South Heaven recently were only because

of the South Heaven Death Formation.

After he finished speaking, the middle-aged man waved his finger in Meng Hao's direction.

"I call upon my Dao to unleash the magic of the Heavens. Bind this child's body and burn him in the flames!" In accompaniment with the man's coolly spoken words, the sea of flames behind him surged explosively toward Meng Hao, transforming into an enormous mouth that sought to consume him.

"Well aren't you something, Mount Sun. I came to settle accounts, which is a right and proper thing to do. But in the end, the kids refuse to admit they owe money, and the adults refuse to discuss the matter reasonably?" Enraged, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to explode out in another sea of flames. This sea of flames also filled half of the sky, and shot menacingly toward the Dao Realm Patriarch.

Rumbling booms echoed out as the two seas of flame collided and then dissipated.

Meng Hao grunted, but then took a step forward, causing his energy to rise as he charged toward the Dao Realm Patriarch. The man's face was pale, and his eyes were wide; Meng Hao's power left him... completely astonished.

When the Mount Sun disciples saw what was happening, they gasped. Even Taiyang Zi's eyes were wide, and his mind was spinning. This was their first time truly witnessing how powerful Meng Hao's cultivation base was.

"Taiyang Zi... are you gonna pay back what you owe, or not!?!?" Meng Hao took a second step, and his energy rose, causing him to emanate what felt like the might of the Heavens throughout the world of Mount Sun.

Chapter 1198: Repay Your Kindness!

“Enough with the ruckus!” The Dao Realm Patriarch’s eyes glinted with coldness. Although he was shocked by Meng Hao’s battle prowess, he still couldn’t believe that he himself was no match for him. Although he wasn’t of a mind to kill Meng Hao, he fully intended to teach him a lesson. Even as the words left his mouth, he took a step forward.

As his foot descended, he stretched his arms wide, causing a tempest to spring up. All of the volcanoes in Mount Sun trembled, and the black smoke in the sky seethed and churned as they gathered towards him. Even the lava that covered the surface of the ground began to rise up into the air and converge together.

In the blink of an eye, a huge sealing mark formed!

It was bright red, and filled with Dao Realm Essence power that was strong enough to shatter Heaven and destroy Earth. Fully 300 meters wide, it floated there in front of the Dao Realm Patriarch, who then waved his hand, sending the sealing mark directly toward Meng Hao.

“I’ll put you in your place and then call some adults from your clan to come take you away!” he said coolly. The huge sealing mark rumbled through the air, bursting with Essence power.

“A piddling 1-Essence Dao Realm cultivator like you dares to try and put me in my place!?” Meng Hao responded calmly. He truly qualified to say such a thing; if he unleashed his Battle Weapon, it would certainly be possible for him to cut this man down.

But he was here to collect debt. Although this Dao Realm Patriarch was blocking his path, after some thought, Meng Hao realized that he should act in good faith, and help Mount Sun consider the gains and losses that could be had.

“I might not have a sealing mark, but I have... this!” Eying the incoming sealing mark, he extended his right hand out into the air, making a snatching motion. Heaven and Earth trembled, and the air in front of him collapsed as a land mass shot out from his palm.

The piece of land started out very small, but in the next moment, it grew to the enormous size of 30,000 meters, blotting out the sky and casting everything into deep shadow.

A boundlessly archaic aura emanated out from the land mass, as if it had existed for countless years of time. That land mass had apparently existed for innumerable eons, and even seemed to contain the will of a Paragon!!

It wasn't the specific will of an individual Paragon, though. It was... the supreme will of the land mass itself!

This 30,000-meter stretch of land was none other than... a piece of the Ruins of Immortality, enormously heavy, and now being wielded by Meng Hao as if it were a magical item. Immediately, he sent it smashing down toward the sealing mark down below.

Apparently, there was nothing in Heaven and Earth, nothing in the Mountain and Sea Realm, no precious treasures that could remain unshaken by this land mass, and even if there were, the sealing mark was not one of them!

The Dao Realm Patriarch's face fell as he saw the chunk of the Ruins of Immortality descending. "That's... part of the Ruins of Immortality! This is impossible!! You.... you actually have part of the Ruins of Immortality!!"

It was a spectacular scene in which everything trembled violently. When the land mass smashed into the sealing mark, the mark trembled. Incapable of standing up to the attack, it collapsed, and the chunk of the Ruins of Immortality continued to rip through the air and then slammed down toward the ground.

If it crashed into the ground, a large portion of the land would surely collapse. The ensuing earthquake would also cause all of the volcanoes in Mount Sun to erupt.

Everything that was happening caused the Dao Realm Patriarch to gasp. How could he ever have predicted that Meng Hao would have a piece of the Ruins of Immortality? This fact only added to his astonishment; his heart had long since begun to pound wildly with shock.

It was at this point that an ancient voice rang out from a distant volcano, filled with surprise. “So, you actually have a piece of the Ruins of Immortality!”

In the blink of an eye, an old man had appeared beneath the Ruins of Immortality. After reaching his hand up and pushing against the descending land mass, he was shoved down several hundred meters before coming to a stop.

He was able to resist the Ruins of Immortality with his power alone!!

The old man’s explosive aura contained swirling Essence power, not that of a single Essence, but rather, three!

Shockingly, this old man was... a 3-Essences Dao Lord!

After successfully collecting the power of three different Essences, one was referred to as a Dao Lord!

The old man’s energy soared, and rumbling echoed out from his hand as he floated up, pushing the Ruins of Immortality back up into the air

“Meng Hao, young friend, please put this thing away,” the old man said, his eyes gleaming with somberness.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. If there was no one in Mount Sun who could catch his chunk of the Ruins of Immortality, then they didn’t qualify to be one of the Five Great Holy Lands.

Even still, Meng Hao was convinced that if his piece of the Ruins of Immortality were larger, then even Dao Lords would be incapable of shouldering it!

He waved his hand, and the land mass flew back into his bag of holding. Meng Hao looked at the old man and said, “I came here today to collect some debts, not to duel with magic.”

The middle-aged Dao Realm Patriarch was apparently on the verge of saying something, but the old man silenced him with a look. The middle-aged man nodded, and the old man suddenly said, “Taiyang Zi!”

His voice echoed out like thunder, causing Taiyang Zi to hurry forth and

kowtow.

“Greetings, Patriarch!” he said, head bowed. Inwardly, he was completely shaken to a Heaven-shaking, Earth-toppling degree. Although he knew that Meng Hao was powerful, he could never have imagined that he was strong enough to face off against Mount Sun’s Patriarchs.

In fact, it was even appropriate to say that Meng Hao was now capable of shaking the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. With a cultivation base like that, now that he had come to settle accounts... there was nothing Taiyang Zi could do other than smile bitterly. He wasn’t sure whether to feel honored, or to sigh.

“How much money do you owe our young friend Meng Hao?” the old man growled.

“I...” Taiyang Zi opened his mouth, but couldn’t find any words. Deep depression filled his heart, and actually, he couldn’t recall exactly how much he owed. After all, he had never admitted to actually owing Meng Hao anything.

When Meng Hao saw what was happening, he coughed dryly and patted his bag of holding. Immediately, a stack of promissory notes appeared, which he began to shuffle through.

“Oh, not much, not much,” he said, kindly deciding to remind Taiyang Zi of the amount. “Let’s see, the trifling sum of 1,000,000 Immortal jades, that’s all.”

“It wasn’t that much!!” Taiyang Zi blurted, trembling as he turned to look at Meng Hao. Even though Meng Hao’s cultivation base was so much higher than his, this was too much for him to bear.

“There’s interest on that too,” Meng Hao said, clearing his throat seriously. “Alright, never mind, just give me the original amount, 1,000,000 Immortal jades, and we’ll call things even.”

Taiyang Zi wanted to cry, but no tears would come. “You–”

He was about to continue speaking when the old man waved his hand, causing a bag of holding to fly out to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao caught it and scanned it with divine sense. Inside were 1,000,000 pieces of Immortal jade, neatly arranged.

Meng Hao immediately looked delighted. Putting the bag of holding away as quickly as possible, he clasped hands respectfully to the old man.

“Many thanks for presiding over justice, Senior. Well then... unless you have other business to discuss, I’ll take off now. I still have quite a few other places to go collect debts. Waiting for too long will give them too much opportunity to prepare, and make the accounts too difficult to settle.” With that, he turned into a beam of light that shot back toward the teleportation portal, then vanished.

Everyone in Mount Sun was completely silent, and many strange expressions could be seen. When Meng Hao vanished, there were many hearts that still blazed with rage at the utter humiliation which had just occurred.

The middle-aged Dao Realm cultivator was one of those people, and stared coldly at Meng Hao the entire time until he disappeared. Finally, he turned to face the old man.

“Elder Brother, why did you let that little bastard off the hook? Once word spreads, how will Mount Sun maintain any face?”

The old man frowned. Looking back at the middle-aged man, he sighed and said, “Don’t provoke him. He’s... a person we can’t afford to rile up.”

The middle-aged man was about to say something when the old man suddenly transmitted a message into his mind.

As soon as the middle-aged cultivator heard it, his face fell, and an expression of disbelief and shock filled his face. Voice hoarse, he said, “What?!?! Is that true?”

“Your cultivation base isn’t sufficient,” the old man said softly, “but with mine, I can pick up on the clues. There’s no other explanation. So... do you really want to provoke someone like that?”

The middle-aged cultivator took a deep breath, then turned and spoke out loud.

“Disciples of Mount Sun, from now on, none of you are to have any dealings with Meng Hao whatsoever. Do not incur debts of gratitude, nor should you sow any enmity. We... must maintain a respectful distance from Meng Hao!”

Taiyang Zi stared in shock. Although he wasn't sure what secret messages the two Patriarchs had passed between each other, from the look of things, Meng Hao was harboring some incredible secret that was powerful enough to cause the two Patriarchs from Mount Sun to fear him.

Taiyang Zi's heart was filled with many complicated emotions. He couldn't help but think about all the times he had interacted with Meng Hao. From the moment he had met him on Planet South Heaven down to this day, Meng Hao was always in the lead, and had transformed into an insurmountable mountain.

The speed of his ascent was incredible, such that Taiyang Zi could do nothing more than look up at him from down below.

In the following days, all of the sects and clans in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were thrown into a huge commotion. All of them heard of or experienced what it was like... to have Meng Hao come and settle accounts.

Any Chosen who had a promissory note in Meng Hao's hand would eventually find him at their doorstep, asking for money. All of the sects and clans were shaken by Meng Hao and his show of power. As a result, his debt collecting went fairly smoothly.

After all, he was not the youngster that he had been in the past. He was now so powerful that he could rock Dao Realm experts. Therefore, the trifling debt and the promissory notes prompted everyone to simply pay up.

Even Meng Hao would never have guessed that his actions of collecting debt would quickly become the conversation topic of all the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Whenever he stepped out of a teleportation portal, everyone who caught sight of him instantly got excited. Word would spread... and countless cultivators would gather to personally watch

him go to settle accounts.

It was because of this that Meng Hao happened to step out of a teleportation portal at one point, and was instantly recognized. People then began to take out jade slips to notify their sects of what was happening.

“Strange, there’s no sect or clan in the vicinity of this teleportation station. This asteroid field is merely a transfer station!”

“Look, his destination is actually near the Ninth Mountain....”

People looked on in confusion as Meng Hao vanished. When he reappeared, shockingly, he was walking out of another teleportation portal in another asteroid field. He looked up into the starry sky above him at... a stretch of crumbled stone!

Those bits of stone had once been complete, and when they were, they had formed... a bridge!

That bridge had actually been constructed in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. It was... the all-powerful Bridge of Immortal Treading!!

In this case, it was Meng Hao who owed someone else. He owed a debt of gratitude!

“Big bro Han Shan... I’ve come to repay your kindness!” he said softly. Then his body flickered as he shot up into the starry sky.

Chapter 1199: The Outrage of the Bridge of Immortality!

The Bridge of Immortal Treading! 1

At one time, it was a majestic bridge that spanned the starry sky, constructed by the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. But then... in the war waged by Ji Tian, it was destroyed....

That was the bitter, bloody war which was fought when the Ji Clan betrayed the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. During that war, the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect was completely destroyed, and Blood Demon was seriously injured. With his life force mortally damaged, he fled to Planet South Heaven, where he was forced to divide his Nascent Divinity and become a clone.

The war also saw the body of the Frost Soil Demon Emperor destroyed, and his soul collapsed. Only a tiny aspect of his soul managed to escape, and was later reincarnated.

Mysteriously, no reports surfaced of the Withering Flame Demon Emperor having died; no one knew what fate he met by the time the war ended....

The Fang Clan led the resistance against the Ji Clan, vying with them for the Lordship of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even after the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect was laid to waste, the fighting continued to go on for years.

Eventually, the Eighth Mountain and Sea was drawn into the conflict. Two great Mountains and Seas fought battle after battle. In the end... Ji Tian secured victory, becoming the new Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

The Mountain and Sea War ended. The civil war was over....

Such historical facts were common knowledge among cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Furthermore, the ruins of the Bridge of Immortal Treading bore testimony to the brutality and carnage of the war.

Nowadays, all that remained of the bridge was this seemingly endless stretch of rubble, floating out in the starry sky. The stones clung together, and from a distance, the general shape of a bridge was still visible.

It was part of the history of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and cultivators were drawn there to struggle in search of good fortune. Some people entered the ruins, never to return. Others acquired the luck they sought, and from then on their life courses drastically changed.

Meng Hao had been here once as a mere Spirit Realm cultivator. This was where he had met Zhixiang, and was also where he had encountered... a benefactor.

Han Shan!

He was the reincarnation of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect's Frost Soil Demon Emperor.... Han Shan!

Han Shan's wife had been eternally imprisoned within the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and Han Shan had been willing to pay any price to come to this place, find her, and awaken her from her state of sleep. Were he unable to do so, then he was willing... to remain there forever with his wife.

He gave his sword, his alcohol flagon, and his frost soil to Meng Hao, connecting them with ties of destiny. He had helped Meng Hao succeed in his efforts, and had also created a bit of hope for himself and his wife....

At that time, Meng Hao had promised that when he achieved his Dao, he would come to repay the kindness!

Han Shan knew that if Meng Hao was the type of person to honor his promises, then he would definitely come back. If Meng Hao was not that type of person... then there was nothing that could be done about the matter. Such future matters were impossible to predict. Back then, Han Shan had no idea what would happen in the end.

Perhaps if Han Shan had remained conscious, he would have occasionally thought about Meng Hao's promise. Or maybe he would have forgotten about the ray of hope that he had given himself, which came

from the opportunity he had given Meng Hao.

The truth of the matter was that Meng Hao would never forget the people who had helped him. Nor would he forget the promises he had made. Never would he forget Guyiding Tri-Rain, nor Han Shan. The promises he had made them existed eternally within his memory.

“Achieve the Dao, fulfill my promise!” he murmured, transforming into a prismatic streak of light that shot up into the starry sky.

“Although I haven’t truly achieved my Dao,” he said softly, “I can still take a shot at freeing big bro Han Shan and his wife....” When he entered the region of the Bridge of Immortality, the excited cultivators who had been following him were quite confused. They couldn’t imagine why Meng Hao would come to this place.

“Could it have something to do with the Ji Clan? That bridge was destroyed by Ji Tian years ago!” As people made their speculations, Meng Hao passed into the bridge, shooting along without even a pause.

He was not the only person inside the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Other cultivators were there, all of them in the Spirit Realm, come from other planets to participate in various trials by fire.

It was just the same as when he had come here years ago.

Meng Hao flew through the various crushed stones that made up the Bridge of Immortal Treading, revisiting places that he remembered from the past. He flew along silently, traveling ever deeper into the ruins.

He saw cultivators, some competing, some cooperating as they sought after good fortune. As he passed familiar places, he thought about his own experiences in the past. He did nothing to interfere with any of the cultivators he saw, nor did they even see him as he passed by. They continued on with their struggles and fights, completely oblivious.

He followed the same path he remembered taking last time. As he proceeded along, he soon realized that there was nobody else present in the locations he had visited formerly. He didn’t stop to check if there was potential good fortune available. His only goal was...

To repay the debt of gratitude.

Soon, a land mass of broken rocks appeared up ahead, and the color of frost soil became evident. Meng Hao had finally reached the depths of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, the place... where he had watched as Han Shan found his wife.

The only difference was that now that he had once again returned, there were none of the soulless Bridge Slaves in sight; all he saw was boundless frost soil. But then he spotted a cliff in the center of that soil. Sitting atop that cliff were a man and a woman.

The woman was leaning up against the man's shoulder. Her eyes were closed, and a faint smile could be seen on her face. She seemed very content. The man's hand was intertwined with her beautiful hair, and he was looking down at her, also smiling.

It was a tender, beautiful sight, and anyone who looked at it would be able to see how much they cared for each other.

However, they were surrounded by seemingly endless frost soil, even the cliff, all of which looked like a deep blue block of ice!

The ice did not emanate any coldness, and yet, it seemed to be sealing them, eternally preserving the two people where they sat.

Apparently, the will of his wife's soul was also sealed there....

Meng Hao walked up silently and stood next to the cliff, looking at the man and the woman. Their familiar faces instantly gave rise to numerous memories.

"Big bro Han Shan...." he said, his voice hoarse. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he could tell at a glance that Han Shan had sealed himself here intentionally.

Rather than live on soullessly, he had somehow used the power of the Frost Soil Demon Emperor to seal both himself and his wife. There they would sit, waiting quietly for a future day when they might awaken.

Meng Hao looked at the man and the woman sitting there on the cliff,

and softly said, “Unless I can dispel all outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, then even if I am able to undo this seal, big bro Han Shan and his wife will have to remain here silently, year after year, unable to leave.

“The outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading... was born because of the Ji Clan. It would require a sacrifice of Ji Clan blood to dispel.... Unfortunately, I don’t have the power to do that right now.

“I can only try to use my cultivation base to shake the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Maybe I can force it to submit....” He took a deep breath and sat down cross-legged beneath the cliff. He closed his eyes, rotated his cultivation base, and drew upon the power of an Allheaven Immortal. Explosive azure light immediately began to shine out in all directions.

In the blink of an eye, the light shone for 30,000 meters, creating an entire world of azure light. At the same time, the Bridge of Immortal Treading began to tremble. Just as Meng Hao had said, he would make an attempt using his own cultivation base, to try to shake the bridge and wipe out its outrage!

As his divine sense spread out to fill the area, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and then he pushed them down onto the ground. Massive rumbling could be heard, rolling out in all directions to fill the entire bridge, with Meng Hao at the center.

All of the stones that made up the Bridge of Immortal Treading were shaking, and soon, Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering shouting could be heard from each one.

The shouts occurred so abruptly that all of the cultivators participating in trials by fire were shocked, and their faces fell. Next, images which appeared to be souls rose up from the stones!

Those numerous souls were all parts of the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

They floated up from each stone, and then rapidly flew together, converging into... the actual soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!!

It floated there above the ruins of the bridge, emanating an indescribable pressure filled with outrage and unyielding hatred that descended upon Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, shining brightly as he looked up at the vengeful soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," Meng Hao said. "There's no reason to be like this. Don't take your anger out on the wrong people. Please allow these two people here to leave...." His voice echoed out throughout the entire Bridge of Immortal Treading, causing all of the cultivators who heard it to stare around in wordless shock.

From what they could tell, some almighty expert had descended from the starry sky to force the bridge into capitulation!

They weren't the only shocked ones. The cultivators who had been following Meng Hao earlier also looked around with wide eyes, completely shaken.

They could see the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and they could sense the boundless outrage and animosity radiating off of it. All of a sudden, they realized why Meng Hao had come here.

"He... he's actually going to try to use his own power to dispel the outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!"

"This bridge's outrage will last for all eternity. The bridge hates the Ji Clan and is outraged at the Ninth Mountain and Sea. It is that very outrage which allows it to stay in the rough form of a bridge, despite having been destroyed!"

"This Meng Hao might be powerful, but how could it be so easy to dispel the outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading?!"

It was at this point that the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, radiating boundless, sinister light, formed into an enormous face which then glared at Meng Hao.

"NO!" it roared, the single word transforming into a shockwave, a windstorm that swept explosively through the bridge toward Meng Hao.

“Your outrage has nothing to do with me,” Meng Hao said slowly. “I came here to take away these two people. If you agree, fine. If you disagree, I don’t care. I’m going to take them.” He waved his arm, causing the entire starry sky to tremble as yet another bridge suddenly appeared.

That bridge abounded with the energy of a Paragon. This was Meng Hao’s Paragon magic, his... Paragon Bridge!

He planned to use the Paragon Bridge to subdue the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

*

1. The Bridge of Immortal Treading arc started in chapter 453. Meng Hao met Han Shan in chapter 460, and the final arc in which Han Shan reunited with his wife began in chapter 468.

Chapter 1200: Absorbing the Bridge of Immortal Treading!!

Rumbling echoed out as the entire Bridge of Immortal Treading shook, and the enormous face roared. Towering killing intent rose up from the bridge, materializing in the form of eight huge hands that shot toward Meng Hao.

“DIE!” the huge face howled.

All of the cultivators participating in trials by fire on the bridge were completely shaken, and the people out in the starry sky were equally astonished. They looked on in complete disbelief as the eight arms bore down on Meng Hao from all directions.

The eight hands were born of outrage, and were filled with madness. Any one of them would be shocking on its own, and currently, they were just on the verge of slamming into Meng Hao. His eyes flashed, and he snorted coldly as he pushed his hand downward.

The gesture caused the land to quake, and Immortal mountains and Divine Flame to appear up above. The mountains slammed into the hands, causing a deafening roar to echo out. The hands fought back, causing everything to shake violently. At the same time, Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge began its descent.

When it slammed into the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, the soul issued a miserable howl, and the Bridge of Immortal Treading shook intensely.

Meng Hao's plan was to use the Paragon Bridge to suppress the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

He wished that he could sate the Bridge of Immortal Treading's outrage with the blood of the Ji Clan, but with his current cultivation base, that was impossible.

However, once he left the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there was no telling when he might return. Although there was no time limit attached to his

promise to Han Shan, the way Meng Hao saw it, if at any point he had the ability to resolve his obligations and thus free himself, he would not put it off any longer than necessary.

As the Paragon Bridge descended, the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading let out a frenzied shout. “NO!”

The gigantic face looked at the Paragon Bridge and screamed with grief and madness.

“The Paramita Bridge... the Paramita Bridge...” it cried. Meng Hao gaped in shock, and a tremor ran through him. As he looked closely, he suddenly realized that...

The Bridge of Immortal Treading and the Paragon Bridge... actually looked similar!

Although both were merely bridges, and would naturally have similar aspects, the feeling they gave off... made it seem like one was an imitation of the other!!

Even some of the ornamentations on the bridges were similar. Meng Hao had never noticed before, because the Bridge of Immortal Treading was in a state of collapse. However, now that the two bridges were next to each other, it was immediately apparent.

“Paragon Bridge. Bridge of Immortal Treading....” His eyes gleamed brightly.

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading built all those years ago by the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect was actually an imitation... of my Paragon Bridge. Or perhaps it’s more accurate to say that it was an imitation of the bridge that I had committed to memory in the depths of my heart, the bridge from which I gained enlightenment regarding my Paragon magic... the Paramita Bridge!” Meng Hao’s eyes went wide as countless implications of this coincidence ran through his head.

He suddenly shot to his feet and waved his arm, causing the pressure from the Paragon Bridge to increase in intensity, and causing azure light to begin to emanate from it.

Rumbling could be heard as the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading howled in its attempts to fight back. However, under the pressure of the Paragon Bridge, the shattered remnants that formed the Bridge of Immortal Treading... were completely shaken.

From the look of things, the stones themselves were trying to free themselves from the force that kept them confined to the Bridge of Immortal Treading, attempting to fly up and be absorbed by the Paragon Bridge! It was as if... a counterfeit had met the original, and could not prevent itself from being sucked in.

Furthermore... one of the most important aspects to the whole situation was that Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge was not complete!

What he had seen back in the Ruins of Immortality was a mere section. It was only by collecting all the insights he had gained during his enlightenment into creating his Paragon magic that he could barely produce a complete bridge. However, Meng Hao knew that he had never actually witnessed the entirety of the bridge and thus his Paragon magic, despite appearing whole, was actually incomplete!

But now... he had come across a stupendous opportunity and good fortune!

"If my Paragon Bridge can absorb this imitation that is the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and thus become complete... then it will be far more powerful than before!

"Most importantly, if I can do that, then I won't need to dispel its outrage to free big bro Han Shan!

"That will be because, if I succeed... there will no longer be any Bridge of Immortal Treading!!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath. What a bizarre and miraculous place the world was! If he had not come back here to pay his debt of gratitude, he would never have come across this opportunity for spectacular good fortune.

"Big bro Han Shan, you don't need to wait for me to destroy the Ji Clan

to dispel the outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. I can save you and your wife... today!" Eyes shining with this new enlightenment, he now felt even more confident in being able to rescue Han Shan and his wife.

Rumbling could be heard as the huge face that was the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading roared and struggled madly in its fight against the pressure of the Paragon Bridge. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he moved forward and suddenly appeared atop the Paragon Bridge!

There, he took a single step forward.

In that instant, the entire Paragon Bridge trembled, and the azure light shone boundlessly. The power of the pressure increased, causing the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading to twist viciously and struggle even harder.

After all, the Paragon Bridge was incomplete, and Meng Hao was not yet in the Dao Realm!

Furthermore, the Bridge of Immortal Treading had existed for countless years, and although it had been suppressed, it was still explosively powerful.

Despite that power, the bridge was still fragmented, and held together only by the outrage born from its destruction. As the bridge trembled violently, suddenly, a few pieces began to rise up toward the Paragon Bridge. They were... absorbed into it, causing the pressure from the Paragon Bridge to grow stronger.

Within the azure light shone beams of whiteness, emanating out from the Paragon Bridge itself.

Apparently, those extra pieces it had just absorbed... made it more complete and real!

Meng Hao's face brightened. Based on what was happening, it appeared that his theory was correct!

"The day that the Paragon Bridge will be completely rebuilt... is this very day!" He waved his sleeve and took a second step forward. Rumbling echoed out, and the pressure from the Paragon Bridge increased. As the

soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading howled and struggled to free itself, brilliant colors flashed about.

No matter how hard it fought, though, it was unable to prevent another piece of stone from flying up, then a second, and a third....

20 pieces, 50 pieces, 100 pieces....

Gradually, more and more stones flew up to be absorbed by the Paragon Bridge. The scene which was playing out in front of all the various cultivators left them completely astonished.

That was especially true of the cultivators who were actually on the bridgestones. They felt like they were in a living nightmare, and unprecedented levels of terror rose up in them. The image of Meng Hao standing on top of that bridge was something they would never forget for the rest of their lives.

Even if their cultivation bases rose higher and higher until they reached the Dao Realm, and they became Patriarchs, they would never be able to forget that picture of Meng Hao and his bridge.

Every step he took caused proverbial lotuses to blossom, as if he were the most supreme existence in the world!

Meng Hao didn't want to make things difficult for those cultivators, so as the stones flew up into the air, the cultivators were picked up by a gentle force and taken to float out in the void, unharmed.

More intense rumbling could be heard as Meng Hao took a third step, then a fourth and a fifth!

Countless bridgestones rose up to merge into the Paragon Bridge, causing it to become even more majestic and real.

The pressure it radiated became even more intense and impossible to withstand, causing the Bridge of Immortal Treading to sink down and the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading to begin to break apart.

It had existed for many years, and could never have imagined that one day it would meet someone who would come against it with the Paragon

Bridge, and could actually subdue and exert such a firm grip over it!

“NO!!” the soul howled. Its energy surged, transforming into an attack which blasted the Paragon Bridge, causing a rumbling boom to echo out. The Paragon Bridge trembled, and Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a strange light.

“Stones of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, return to the Paragon Bridge. Henceforth, you will no longer be the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Instead... you will become part of the Paragon Bridge!

“You will only have this opportunity once,” Meng Hao said, boosting his voice with his cultivation base, imbuing it with the will of the Paragon Bridge. “Bridge of Immortal Treading... hurry up and return. The time to act is now! ”

The void trembled, and the Bridge of Immortal Treading suddenly exploded.

Its bridge-like shape no longer existed, and countless stone fragments transformed into beams of light that shot from their place in the void... directly toward the Paragon Bridge!!

100. 1,000. 10,000. 100,000.... Innumerable bridgestones flew up into the air.

The surrounding cultivators were flabbergasted, and were immediately sent into a commotion.

“He’s... he’s taking away the Bridge of Immortal Treading?”

“He’s not taking it away, he’s consuming and absorbing it!!”

“This Meng Hao... he’s... he’s simply too powerful!!”

All of the stones that made up the Bridge of Immortal Treading were now floating up, and the void itself was distorted, as if the starry sky were about to collapse!

As the Paragon Bridge absorbed them, it glowed with increasingly powerful light and its energy rocketed up. The pressure grew stronger, far stronger than before. The entire starry sky trembled as boundless ripples

flowed out in all directions.

Even more shocking was that the Paragon Bridge was now emanating... an aura that didn't seem to be part of the Mountain and Sea Realm. It was as if its will were awakening!

In fact... the will of the Paragon Bridge was actually... the will of the Paramita Bridge!!

A will of Heaven Trampling!! 1

That will caused the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea to rumble. Then the Eighth Mountain and Sea was affected. After that, the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and then, the entire Mountain and Sea Realm!

At the peaks of the Nine Mountains, within the nine pools of water, nine holy Xuanwu turtles suddenly let out a powerful howl. It was almost exactly the same as when the Outsider from the 33 Heavens had appeared!!

*

1. In chapter 1122, Slaughter, the apparently Paragon-level entity inside of Dao-Heaven's Paragon Painting, saw Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge and called it "Heaven Trampling Bridge".

Chapter 1201: Son of the Mountains and Seas!

As the nine Xuanwu turtles howled, a cold, emotionless voice suddenly echoed out into the minds of the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas. “The Paramita Bridge has awakened. Destroy it! Eradicate its life force. It must not become complete!!”

Simultaneously, the sun and moon flickered with explosive destructive power!

Back in the former location of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, the bridgestones continued to fuse into the Paragon Bridge, causing its energy to rise up explosively.

Meng Hao stood atop it, completely steady despite how violently it was shaking. His eyes gleamed with a strange light as he suddenly realized something.

“There are two stages to Paragon magics. The first is the illusory stage, and the second is... the corporeal stage!

“Only by advancing the Paragon magic to the corporeal stage can it truly explode with power!

“In fact, that power depends on the physical Paragon object!

“Having Paragon magic means you can join the Echelon. By advancing the Paragon magic to the corporeal, you... transcend the Echelon!!” As Meng Hao gained this new enlightenment, his Echelon mark appeared on his forehead, flickering brilliantly. As it glowed, it began to transform!

Apparently, he was moving beyond the Echelon, turning into a completely unique entity in the Mountain and Sea Realm!

The soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, seeing that it could do nothing to stop what was happening, let out a maddened roar. Eyes blazing, it cried, “I refuse to accept this!

“If I can absorb the Paramita Bridge, then I’ll finally be free! I can escape

from this sea of bitterness and be like the fish who jumped over the dragon gate!” The face that represented the soul howled as it ceased resisting and actually shot directly toward the Paragon Bridge.

This was its ultimate decision. It would try to possess the Paragon Bridge, to take its place. Such an outcome wasn’t an impossibility. After all... it was born from the outrage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and was actually... a soul automaton!

The soul of the replica was trying to possess the object after which it had been fashioned, to take its place!

Rumbling could be heard as the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading merged into the Paragon Bridge. Meng Hao could do nothing to stop it, and in the blink of an eye, it was part of the Paragon Bridge. Everything was shaking violently as the Bridge of Immortal Treading completely vanished from the starry sky. Numerous cultivators in the area were pushed away from the vicinity, and the cultivators who had come to watch were staring wide-eyed.

There was now only one bridge in the starry sky, and that was... Meng Hao’s Paragon Bridge!

However, the Paragon Bridge was trembling as its aura rose up. The soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading was trying to possess it in an attempt to become the soul of the Paragon Bridge!

“I can allow you to become the soul of the Paragon Bridge....” Meng Hao said.

A roaring response could be heard from the Paragon Bridge: “I don’t need you to allow me! I can do it myself!”

A powerful force battered away at the connection between Meng Hao and the Paragon Bridge, trying to separate it from Meng Hao and turn it into an independent entity.

It was attempting to do the same thing that Meng Hao had done to the Paragon Painting of the First Mountain’s Echelon cultivator, to break it away from him permanently.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he was about to unleash all his power to suppress it, when suddenly, an intense sensation of imminent crisis welled up in him. Looking up, he could sense a powerful force of expulsion coming from the Mountain and Sea Realm itself. A huge power was coming, a power that would destroy the Paragon Bridge that was still in the midst of awakening and being completed.

Meng Hao's face flickered; although he wanted to put away the Paragon Bridge, because of the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, he could not. Suddenly, he shot backward, moving to the location on the Paragon Bridge where Han Shan and his wife were. He quickly waved his hand to set up a shield around them, then looked out into the starry sky, his eyes shining with a strange light.

He even stopped trying to prevent the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading from interfering with his connection to the Paragon Bridge, and he looked up into the starry sky and caught sight of a beam of light.

That light... was caused because of the roaring of the nine Xuanwu turtles, and was... killing intent from the sun and moon!

An all-destructive arrow of light pierced through the starry sky, slamming into the Paragon Bridge to destroy it.

The Paragon Bridge started shaking, and because it was born from Meng Hao's magic, Meng Hao also trembled and coughed up a mouthful of blood. However, the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading was even more seriously wounded.

The Bridge Soul let out a bloodcurdling scream, and the entire Paragon Bridge shook. Massive destructive power washed over it, and the Bridge Soul could feel the menacing threat of death.

"Do you surrender or not!?" Meng Hao suddenly said. "Surrender, and become mine. A single thought on my part can make you the soul of the Paragon Bridge!

"Refuse to surrender, and you'll be destroyed by the power of the Mountains and Seas!" Meng Hao was now using the power of the Mountains and Seas to threaten the soul.

“I’ll die before I surrender!!” the Bridge Soul howled. “If I die, the bridge will be destroyed, and you’ll be wiped out too!” Suddenly, a second arrow of light appeared, even more powerful and terrifying than the previous one. It slammed into the bridge, shattering the azure light, overwhelming the white light, and causing the entire Paragon Bridge to tremble and begin to fall apart once again.

The rising energy was interrupted, and Meng Hao coughed up more blood. As he fought back against the power, the Bridge Soul screamed and weakened even further. It... could not withstand a third arrow!!

“I’ll give you one last chance.” he said, eyes shining. “Yield to me, and become my Bridge Soul. I, Meng Hao, swear an oath that I will use the blood of the Ji Tian to resolve your blood feud. I will help you resolve your outrage!

“If you don’t take advantage of this opportunity, then I’ll watch as the power of the Mountains and Seas obliterates you.”

Even as the words left his mouth, a third arrow of light appeared off in the distance. It looked like a sun, and the entire starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea trembled from the ripples which emanated off of it. It seemed to contain a power that could shake Heaven and Earth... that would destroy anything with a single strike!

The Bridge Soul trembled. In this critical life-or-death moment of crisis, it let out a miserable cry.

“Even if I yield to you, I’ll still be killed by that power. You’ll still abandon the bridge to save yourself. I die either way!”

“I won’t abandon the Paragon Bridge,” Meng Hao said with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. “If you yield, I’ll make sure you will not perish!”

The Bridge Soul shivered. Considering it was about to be destroyed, it had little choice. It immediately opened itself up. Meng Hao unleashed his divine sense, borrowing strength from the Paragon Bridge to leave his mark on the Bridge Soul.

That mark was now indelibly branded into the soul, never to be removed!

“Now let’s see how you keep your promise!!” the Bridge Soul roared. As soon as Meng Hao marked it, it had no need to attempt to possess the Paragon Bridge, nor any reason to interfere with Meng Hao’s connection to it. The Paragon Bridge approved of the Bridge Soul, allowing it to fill the bridge. Instantly, the bridge’s power exploded with incredible might.

Now that it was marked... it became part of Meng Hao. Furthermore, there was now absolutely no way for the Paragon Bridge to leave Meng Hao’s control. Regardless of whether it was illusory or corporeal, that fact would never change!

You could even say that the Paragon Bridge, having absorbed the Bridge of Immortal Treading... now had the good fortune to one day become completely corporeal!

“The next step is to go to the Ruins of Immortality and absorb the entire section of the real Paragon Bridge!” Meng Hao thought, eyes gleaming. At long last, he understood the path of the Paragon!

By this point, the third arrow of light had almost arrived. The Bridge Soul trembled as Meng Hao stepped off of the Paragon Bridge, placing himself directly in the arrow’s path. Then he lifted his right hand and pushed it toward the arrow!

That movement caused a tremor to run through the Bridge Soul. How could it ever have imagined that Meng Hao would do something like this, stand up directly to the power of the Mountains and Seas?

“He’s crazy....” whispered the Bridge Soul.

However, what happened in the next moment caused the Bridge Soul to gape in complete disbelief.

That was because the arrow slowed to a stop directly in front of Meng Hao!

“I call upon the authority of my status to order you... to return whence you came!” he said softly, eyes blazing with determination. Although his hand did not possess the power to resist the arrow, his voice was like an

unbreakable barrier that made his hand completely and thoroughly impenetrable. The arrow stopped as if it didn't dare to pierce through it.

A cold voice spoke out into Meng Hao's mind, echoing like thunder: "The Paramita Bridge may exist. However, to prevent anything untoward from occurring with this particular awakened bridge, it will be destroyed!"

"This bridge is my Paragon magic, nothing untoward will occur," Meng Hao said coolly.

"According to the law, the bridge may not—"

"If I say nothing untoward will occur, nothing will! Back down!" As he spoke, he caused the drop of Paragon's blood inside of him to suddenly flare up. Its aura spread out, not much, but enough to completely shock the nine Xuanwu turtles on the tops of the Nine Mountains!

The cold voice that represented the will of the Mountain and Sea Realm was also astonished!

The arrow trembled, and the cold voice fell silent. Meng Hao said nothing more. He simply stood there, and even let his hand drop to his side. Behind him, the Bridge Soul inside the Paragon Bridge was staring in shock.

After a moment, the cold voice once again echoed out into Meng Hao's mind.

"The orders of the Son of the Mountains and Seas shall be followed!" The arrow slowly faded away, transforming into motes of glittering light that spread out into the void.

Meng Hao breathed a sigh of relief. Everything that had just happened had been a gamble, considering he wasn't sure exactly how much control he could wield over the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"Son of the Mountains and Seas...." he thought, smiling slightly. He liked the sound of that title. As he turned, the mark on his forehead completed its transformation. Shockingly... it now depicted nine mountains, which flashed briefly before vanishing.

The Bridge Soul inside the Paragon Bridge said nothing, but it now felt unprecedented respect and awe for Meng Hao. It did nothing at all to resist him, and when he waved his hand, the bridge slowly faded away.

Now, the only thing that remained in the starry sky was a floating block of ice. Within that ice were Han Shan and his wife. They looked just like they had before, sitting there together, leaning up against each other. Gradually, the ice began to melt. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Han Shan shuddered, then looked up in confusion at Meng Hao.

As soon as Han Shan looked at him, a smile broke out on Meng Hao's face. Clasp hands, he bowed deeply and said, "Big bro Han Shan, I'm happy to say that I've fulfilled your request!"

Chapter 1202: Forever and Ever!

The starry sky was now completely silent. As for the Spirit Realm cultivators who had been on the bridge participating in trials by fire and who were now scattered about in space, Meng Hao assisted them, and encouraged the other cultivators who had followed him to do the same. These cultivators who had borne witness to the vanishing of the Bridge of Immortal Treading and the subsequent rise of the Paragon Bridge agreed with the request and began to send the Spirit Realm cultivators back to their respective sects.

Everything was brought to a perfect conclusion, and Meng Hao repaid his debt of gratitude. Not only were Han Shan and his wife saved, but Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge underwent shocking transformations.

Now, Meng Hao stood there, smiling warmly at Han Shan, thinking about everything that had happened so many years ago.

At first, Han Shan looked confused, but gradually, his eyes grew clear. His wife shivered as she woke up, and also looked around blankly. Then she saw her husband, and the blankness vanished, to be replaced with a gentle gaze.

It was as if... no matter where she was, or what hardships would come along, as long as Han Shan was there... she would be fine.

Han Shan slowly rose to his feet, looking around for a moment before his gaze came to fall on Meng Hao. An expression of appreciation appeared in his eyes, and he laughed. "Have any alcohol...?"

Meng Hao smiled and waved his hand. The alcohol flagon that Han Shan had given him years ago flew out. Han Shan grabbed it, threw his head back, and took a long swig.

Han Shan lowered the alcohol flagon and looked seriously at Meng Hao. "Young friend, I will remember this great kindness which you have shown us for all eternity!"

He didn't mention anything about Meng Hao freeing him. Giving voice

to thanks wasn't important. What was important... was that he had not been mistaken to place his trust in Meng Hao.

What was important was that he and his wife had both been saved, and he now owed Meng Hao two lives. That was something that Han Shan would never forget!

Meng Hao shook his head. "I had no choice in the matter, big bro Han Shan. I had to do it! Didn't I say I would?"

He looked at Han Shan and his wife, and could see how happy they were.

Han Shan said nothing more. He simply stepped forward and embraced Meng Hao.

"No need to draw things out, bro," he said. "Suffice to say... if you need us, my wife and I will be there for you. Together!"

He and Meng Hao laughed heartily. Han Shan's wife stood off to the side, watching them silently, her eyes filled with appreciation.

Soon, it was time to part, and Meng Hao suggested that Han Shan and his wife go settle down on Planet South Heaven, and even gave them the appropriate identity medallions to go there. Han Shan was not of a mind to refuse. Now that he had his wife back, it didn't matter where they went.

Since Planet South Heaven was Meng Hao's home, Han Shan was more than willing to go there.

Meng Hao watched Han Shan and his wife leave. Soon, the flash of a teleportation portal could be seen, and they vanished. At that point, Meng Hao turned and looked one last time at the place previously occupied by the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Then he turned and headed toward another teleportation portal.

This time, he was not going to collect money from anyone. Instead, he was going to the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum!

The Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum was also one of the Five Great Holy Lands, and was where... his childhood friend Fatty lived.

Although, by this point, it would probably be less appropriate to call Li

Fugui simply Fatty. He now deserved to be called... Big Fatty!

He was now so fat that it would take four people to wrap their arms around him. However, he was still quite lively, and his teeth were sharper than ever. The Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum had treated him well, and he was already an Immortal.

When it came to his beloved partners, he actually had quite a few more than before. No longer did he only have one hundred. Now, he had five hundred!!

When Meng Hao got to the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum and announced his intentions, Fatty came rolling out like a ball. When Meng Hao laid eyes on him, his jaw dropped.

“Biggest bro, you... you finally came to see me!!” Fatty roared, racing over to hug Meng Hao. Unfortunately, his belly was too big and his arms weren’t long enough, making an embrace impossible....

When the huge belly bumped into Meng Hao, he stumbled backward, laughing awkwardly. He looked over the spheroid that was Fatty, and started to get a bit worried. However, after scanning him with divine sense and seeing the level of his cultivation base, he felt a bit better.

“You should eat less....” Meng Hao said with a wry smile as Fatty led him into the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. Of course, the sect itself could by no means ignore the arrival of Meng Hao, and went all out to receive him. Even one of the Dao Realm Patriarchs emerged.

Meng Hao decided to stay there for several days, during which time he and Fatty would reminisce, talking about old times and wonderful memories.

On one occasion after they had been drinking and talking for a while, Fatty started crying. He told Meng Hao that he missed his father and mother, and had even gone back to Planet South Heaven on several occasions. However, the State of Zhao was gone, and he had never been able to track them down.

He knew that even if he did manage to find them, his parents had

probably long since passed on, and the rest of the members of his household would have gone their separate ways....

However, he still missed them, and in fact, as time passed, that feeling had grown even stronger. In fact, sometimes he felt like it didn't matter that he could live for such a long time, and had such a thriving harem. He... still wished that his parents could be around.

Seeing Fatty weeping in this way caused Meng Hao to sigh. However, all he could do was sit there listening and drinking.

Apparently, Fatty hadn't had a chance to vent in quite a while. After crying for a bit, he started chuckling again, and soon they were talking about the Reliance Sect.

That had been one of the happiest times of Fatty's life. Eventually they started reminiscing about the vendor booth they had set up, and Meng Hao couldn't help but laugh out loud. Fatty joined him, and soon their laughter was echoing out.

However, it was impossible to talk about the Reliance Sect and not bring up the subject of Xu Qing....

Fatty sighed. "You know, of the four of us who Elder Sister Xu took to the Reliance Sect, Wang Youcai has turned out to be the fiercest. He really shook things up over at Moonset Lake. They call him the Devil-Eyed Killer. He's really famous....

"As for me, I'm pretty useless, although I manage to get by. But biggest bro, you... well, I don't even need to talk about that, do I? And there's Dong Hu. I'm not sure what happened to him, he seems to have vanished without a trace.

"Now that I think about it, Elder Sister Xu... had some excellent powers of foresight....

"Oh, right. Meng Hao, remember that cave back on Mount Daqing, and how you threw that vine down? Hahaha! I guess you got lucky, didn't you? Otherwise you would never have been taken to the Reliance Sect...."

Meng Hao cleared his throat. The things Fatty was talking about caused

him to recall everything that had happened back then. After failing the Imperial exams another time, he had gone for a walk on Mount Daqing, sighing to himself about his life. Back then, how could he ever have imagined that heading up the mountain that day... would completely change his life!?

The world had lost a scholar that day, and gained a cultivator. And the Mountain and Sea Realm... had gained its future Lord!

When Xu Qing's name came up, Meng Hao thought about the Red Wedding, and his mood sank. He finally told Fatty that he was going to the Fourth Mountain to get her back.

Fatty could see that Meng Hao's mood was sinking, so he quickly waved his sleeve, calling to a young woman who stood off in the distance. She approached, clasped hands, and bowed to Meng Hao.

"Biggest bro, come come, let me introduce you to one of my beloved partners. This is my true love, Little Emerald...."

Meng Hao looked at the woman, smiled, and nodded. Considering that Fatty had called her his true love, Meng Hao took out a magical item and handed it over.

Seeing this, Fatty's eyes suddenly gleamed. Before Meng Hao knew what was happening....

"Biggest bro, this is the love of my life, Little Scarlet...."

"Biggest bro, this is my heart and soul, Little Sweetie...."

"Biggest bro, this is my...." One by one, Fatty brought out all five hundred of his beloved partners to introduce to Meng Hao, even managing to recall the different pet names for all of them. Meng Hao looked at all the women, and Fatty's crafty smile and the exultant gleam in his eyes, and could do nothing but smile wryly as he gifted one magical item after another.

When the last beloved partner had been introduced, Meng Hao assumed the entire affair was over. But next, Fatty called a young man over.

“Why haven’t you kowtowed to your Uncle Meng Hao yet!?” Fatty said, eyes wide with anger. Then he turned and smiled at Meng Hao.

“This is my son....”

Meng Hao’s eyes went wide. He looked at the young man, and then back at Fatty. Chuckling wryly, he handed a magical item over as a gift. After that... Fatty introduced over three hundred sons and daughters....

And after that....

“Biggest bro, this is my grandson....”

Meng Hao felt numb. He had to admire how Fatty could remember the nicknames of all five hundred of his beloved partners and not make a single mistake. Neither did he forget the names of any of his sons or daughters.

Nor the more than one hundred grandchildren. Most terrifying to Meng Hao was that he soon found out that Fatty actually had great-grandchildren too.... Although the great-grandchildren were all toddlers or younger, Meng Hao couldn’t hold back from giving them gifts too.

After all, having given so many gifts already, he couldn’t stop short now.

He had originally planned to stay for several days, but by the second day, he quickly took his leave. He was worried that if he stayed any longer, the loot he had built up so carefully in his bag of holding would eventually all be divided up by Fatty’s family.

“Since I can’t take over the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, my goal is to have my descendants do it for me!” Fatty said as he saw Meng Hao off. His eyes glittered with a strange light as he gave voice to his grand aspirations.

Meng Hao couldn’t help but admire such notions. He had the feeling that Fatty would definitely be able to pull something like that off. Eyes glittering encouragingly, he patted Fatty on the shoulder.

“Work hard, bro,” he said. “I think five hundred beloved partners is actually only a good starting point. You should really have at least five thousand. That way, you would have a great big clan!

“Think about it, you would have thousands of sons and daughters, and then when they had children, the final number would be astounding....” It might be somewhat irresponsible, but Meng Hao egged Fatty on anyway.

In response, Fatty’s eyes lit up, and he started laughing heartily.

“No wonder you’re the biggest bro. That’s a great idea! I was thinking the same thing, I’m going to start a clan!” Seeing the wild ambition flickering in Fatty’s eyes caused Meng Hao to cough dryly and then turn to leave.

There was no bitterness to this parting, only smiles. Meng Hao didn’t mention anything about when he would return again, nor did Fatty ask. Both avoided the topic.

When it came time to actually part ways, Fatty’s smile faded away, and he clasped Meng Hao by the shoulders.

“Meng Hao... we’re brothers, forever and ever!”

“Forever!” Meng Hao replied with a decisive nod. They looked at each other for another moment, then started laughing again. Finally, they turned and parted; one headed back to his sect, the other off into the distance....

Chapter 1203: Old Friends

After leaving the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, Meng Hao flew through the starry sky, thinking about the old days in the Reliance Sect. After a while, he turned and headed toward another asteroid and another teleportation portal.

This time, his destination was the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!

He was not going there to collect money either, but to see an old friend. His Elder Brother Chen Fan had joined the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto years ago!

Meng Hao was not unfamiliar with the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. Although he had never been there, since he was the joint disciple of the Three Great Daoist Societies, then technically speaking, the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto was also his sect.

As soon as he arrived, the sound of tolling bells rang out through the sect. The Dao Realm Patriarchs came out to see him, and Meng Hao was taken to offer respects to the Sect Leader and the Patriarchs and explain the purpose of his visit.

When he finally saw Chen Fan, he looked different than before. Last time, he had seemed middle-aged, but now he looked old, with grayish-white hair and a placid expression. His cultivation base was in the Immortal Realm.

Although he wasn't very well known among the disciples of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, the Elder Generation felt that he had unlimited potential!

Chen Fan sat in meditation. Wherever he went, he took a huge boulder with him, within which could be seen the faint image of a woman.

One of the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto stood next to Meng Hao, explaining. "He converges his love and transforms the love into a sword, a sword that can pierce the Heavens!

"The sword of your Elder Brother here is not merciless, and does not

sever love. His memories of the past have filled his heart to the point where they have become his sword. His love... allows him to cultivate the Dao of the Heart-Sword!

“His latent talent is well suited to such a Dao. If he can step into the Ancient Realm within the next hundred years, then he will definitely be another Chosen of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!” The praise in his eyes as he looked at Chen Fan was impossible to conceal.

Chen Fan’s eyes slowly opened as he looked first at the sword laid across his knees, then up at Meng Hao. A smile appeared on his face.

It was the same smile Meng Hao remembered from the Reliance Sect, and the Solitary Sword Sect. It was a warm, caring smile, although now it seemed much more ancient.

“Little Junior Brother,” he said. As soon as those three words left his mouth, Meng Hao’s heart surged with emotion, as he remembered all the things that had happened in the past.

“Elder Brother...” Meng Hao said softly. As he walked over toward Chen Fan, the Dao Realm Patriarch smiled slightly, then turned and left, leaving Meng Hao in Chen Fan’s care.

Meng Hao first clasped hands and bowed in greeting to the boulder. He knew that the woman in that boulder was his Eldest Brother’s true love, and that she had eventually come to be Chen Fan’s entire life.

In my life, I will only love one person. I fell in love with you when you were alive. And after you died, that feeling became a memory.... If you live, I will spend my whole life with you. If you die, then I will accompany the memory of you for my whole life.

That was Chen Fan.

His naivety and obsession were why the Solitary Sword Sect chose to take him from the Reliance Sect in the first place. Back then, he didn’t hesitate at all to make his decision. If the sect was going to be destroyed, then he would choose... to die along with it.

He was naive and obsessed. That... was Chen Fan!

Chen Fan's expression was the same as ever as he watched Meng Hao offer formal greetings to the boulder. Since Meng Hao was his little Junior Brother, then Meng Hao was also Junior Brother to his wife as well.

Years ago, he had constantly worried about this Junior Brother of his. But then, he had watched him flourish, one step at a time, and that made him very happy. He had always hoped that Meng Hao would continue to improve, and that one day, he would reach the true pinnacle.

"On the path of cultivation," Chen Fan said softly, "it doesn't matter if you talk about your own heart, or the Dao. The most important thing is to be steadfast."

Meng Hao nodded, then sat down cross-legged in front of Chen Fan. It felt just like it had back in the year they had met. Now, Meng Hao possessed a cultivation base that stood on equal footing with the Dao Realm. However, in the presence of his Elder Brother, he was still... the same little Junior Brother he had always been.

That was how it would be for their entire lives.

He told Chen Fan about his plan to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea, to find Xu Qing and bring her back.

"I am aware of the purpose of your visit," Chen Fan said quietly. "We are cultivators, and our lifespans are long. Heaven and Earth are large, and it's a good thing to visit new places, and travel new paths.... There is no need to worry about us here in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. We all have our own different paths.

"You have to trust Li Fugui and myself, just as we trust you. All of our dreams... will come true eventually!" He looked over at the rock, and the faint image of the woman inside.

"Elder Brother.... If it ever becomes possible for me to do so, I will definitely... help you resurrect sister-in-law Shan Ling!" Meng Hao said softly. It was his first time he had ever said such a thing. Although he had been able to keep his promise to Han Shan, considering the level of his cultivation base, there was no way for him to resurrect someone who had been dead for so long.

“You’re thinking too hard on it,” Chen Fan said, chuckling. His eyes shone with a soft light. “To me, she’s always here.”

Meng Hao stared at Chen Fan in shock.

“When your Dao is the heart, then if you have something in your heart, it exists. If you don’t have it in your heart, it doesn’t exist.” Chen Fan waved his right hand, and something like a Domain appeared. It wasn’t very large, only about nine meters wide.

However, now that that nine-meter Domain existed, Meng Hao could see that the woman in the boulder was opening her eyes. Her life force seemed to be restored, and suddenly... she walked out from within the boulder and sat down next to Chen Fan. She looked at Meng Hao, smiling as she leaned up against Chen Fan’s shoulder.

“This....” Meng Hao said, taking a deep breath. This Daoist magic first gave him the sensation that he was looking at an illusion. However, as he examined the woman closely, she actually didn’t seem like an illusion at all.

Chen Fan looked deeply into Meng Hao’s eyes and said, “She might seem artificial to you, but to me, she is very real.... Sometimes the difference between what is artificial and what is real depends on different perspectives and different hearts.”

Meng Hao’s heart trembled as if he had just gained some sort of enlightenment. He closed his eyes and began to meditate. Three days later, he opened his eyes again. Rising to his feet, he clasped hands and bowed to Chen Fan.

“Many thanks for your advice, Eldest Brother,” he said. Although his cultivation base far exceeded that of Chen Fan’s, Chen Fan’s circumstances made him serendipitously proficient with the Dao of the real and the artificial. That was the reason that he cultivated the Heart-Sword, and was one of the reasons why the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto viewed him with such importance.

“Go. Bring Junior Sister Xu Qing back. I haven’t seen her in a long time, and I miss her.” Chen Fan’s eyes glowed with encouragement. Meng Hao

took a deep breath, nodded, and took his leave.

His next destination was the Moonset Lake, one of the Five Great Holy Lands. In many ways, the place was not as beautiful as the name would have it sound. Meng Hao had never dealt much with the sect, but he was aware that the techniques of the Moonset Lake were similar to the Dao of the Devils!

When the moon hangs high in the sky, it might be nighttime, but there is still light. However, after the moon sets, when the sun has not yet risen, there is no darker time of night.

That was the meaning of the name Moonset Lake!

Wang Youcai fit in well. He was fundamentally a ruthless person; he treated others ruthlessly, and... he treated himself even more so. In order to further his cultivation and create his own technique, to see further than he had ever been able to see... he had dug out his own eyes.

The ruthlessness of that act had caught the attention of the Elders of Moonset Lake, and was what prompted them to take him in and help him grow and develop.

Although most people assumed he lived in a world of complete darkness, there was something that nobody knew. Wang Youcai could actually see things very vividly.

The divine ability he created remained eternally fixed inside his mind. From then on, he could actually see everything, even though he had no eyes.

After arriving at Moonset Lake, his ferocity and ruthlessness were even more evident. After going through some fierce battles, both with members of his sect and with others, he had earned the nickname Devil-Eyed Killer.

The word 'Devil' was a term of respect. The word 'eye' was a reference to the two empty eye sockets on his face. And the word 'killer'... represented how he slaughtered his enemies!

When Meng Hao came and said that he wished to visit Wang Youcai, the disciple assigned to receive visitors looked at him with a flickering

expression. Apparently, in Moonset Lake, Wang Youcai's name was even more awe-inspiring than Meng Hao's.

And that was despite the fact that Wang Youcai was still only an Immortal!

When he was taken to Wang Youcai, he found him sitting cross-legged next to a black pond. Vicious-looking faces floated in and out of the water, swirling around Wang Youcai as they consumed parts of his flesh.

"Long time no see, Meng Hao," he said in a grating voice. He lifted his head up, staring at Meng Hao with his two vacant eye sockets.

Meng Hao looked at him and sighed.

After a moment of silence, Wang Youcai slowly said, "There's no reason to sigh. Everything comes with a price."

The faces around him continued to tear at his flesh, and yet he didn't even frown. Apparently, he was used to this.

"These are all the people I've killed, whose souls I extracted. I allow them to chew on me day and night. It is only in this way that I can feel their hatred, and thus, see the colorful world around me."

Meng Hao looked at Wang Youcai and sighed inwardly. The four young men who had been taken from Mount Daqing all those years ago included himself, Fatty, Wang Youcai, and Dong Hu.... Fatty had the most carefree life, and Wang Youcai was the most vicious. As for Dong Hu, although had been missing for many years, Meng Hao had the feeling that... he was somewhere out there, shaking things up violently.

Meng Hao meditated with Wang Youcai for an entire night. The following day, he stood and turned to go, when Wang Youcai suddenly said, "Meng Hao... we're friends, right...?"

Meng Hao looked back at him and replied, "We were friends in the past, we're friends now, and we'll be friends in the future."

Wang Youcai laughed. It was grating, but not ear-piercing. This was the same bumbling young man from back on Mount Daqing, who thought

that because he was the oldest, he had to take care of his friends.

“Meng Hao, you must become as strong as you can, and quickly.... The moon has set, and the sun has not risen.... The dark of night has come... and it's impossible to say how long it will last.

“I have seen, and I can feel, that soon... great chaos... will strike!”

Meng Hao shivered. Although he knew exactly what was being referred to, he had never imagined that Wang Youcai would too. He gazed at him deeply for a long moment, then left.

Slowly, he faded away into the distance, leaving Moonset Lake behind.

Chapter 1204: As Of Now, It's Called the Paragon Bridge!

Next he went to the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Before leaving the Ninth Mountain and Sea, he wanted to see... Ke Jiusi!

However, although he could find the location of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, he was unable to enter. There was an invisible barrier in place that he could not pass without trying to break it open.

He hovered quietly outside of the ruins for a while before finally clasping hands and bowing deeply. Then he turned and left.

On a mountain peak inside the rubble of the sect, Ke Jiusi stood there looking at Meng Hao leave.

Suddenly Night's voice spoke out next to him: "Why didn't you let him in?"

"He has Ji Tian's Karma on him... and I have even more than he does. If the two of us met now... it would be harmful for him." Ke Jiusi sighed, then turned his head to look out at the ruins stretching out beneath him.

"Ji Tian...." he murmured, cold killing intent gleaming in his eyes.

Meng Hao didn't get a chance to meet Ke Jiusi again. He left and headed toward the Ruins of Immortality. He needed to get the incomplete Paragon Bridge that he had copied to make his Paragon magic. Back then, he had been unable to take away the bridge itself.

But now, his own Paragon Bridge had already transformed. Thanks to the Bridge of Immortal Treading, it was no longer illusory, but corporeal. With his current cultivation base... he would be able to use his Paragon magic and merge it with the true broken Paragon Bridge.

A prismatic streak shot into the Ruins of Immortality as Meng Hao followed the same course as last time. He saw many of the same things he had seen before. He saw broken down temples and huge disembodied heads. He saw numerous corpses, shattered lands, destroyed magical

items, and the ruins of palaces, all floating out in the void....

After a long time, he reached the area where he had created his Daoist magic, and then found the location where he had gained enlightenment of his Paragon magic... the shattered bridge!

It was only a section of that bridge, but even from a distance and despite the fact that it had fallen into ruins, Meng Hao could sense the might of a Paragon emanating off of it, the incredible power of Heaven and Earth.

This bridge had once spanned the highest Heavens, and had been the object of worship by countless life forms, all of whom deeply desired to walk upon it!

But now, it was broken. Perhaps most of the bridge had faded away into the sands of time, and only this small section was what remained.

After all the years that had passed, it remained in this one spot. No one had ever been able to take it away. Not even Ji Tian could take it, much less other Dao Realm cultivators.

However, years ago, Meng Hao had forged his own Paragon magic by means of this bridge and thus had allowed it to become whole once again. It was that very Daoist magic that had earned him a spot in the Echelon.

Today, he had returned to take the bridge away!

“Are you really the Paramita Bridge?” he asked softly. “Well, I’m not completely certain what your previous name was, but I do know... that a lot of people know you.” He couldn’t help but think of the black-robed man who had emerged from the Paragon Painting in the Windswept Realm, and the expression on his face when he saw the Paragon Bridge.

“Perhaps in the so-called Paramita, even Paragons need to walk across you... to truly become Paragons.... 1

“But today, I’m going to take you away. From now on, you... belong to Meng Hao. You are my... Paragon Bridge!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a bright light as he began to walk forward toward the bridge. The pressure of a Paragon rumbled out, and Meng Hao began to shine with scintillating light. He waved his right hand, and suddenly his Paragon Bridge appeared.

“Merge!” he roared, performing a double handed incantation gesture and then waving his finger toward his Paragon Bridge. Instantly, the two bridges began to merge together. The roar of the Bridge Soul could be heard from the Paragon Bridge as it ensured that nothing unexpected happened during the merger.

As the process continued, the pressure radiating off of the Paragon Bridge grew stronger. Rumbling filled the air, and everything grew dim. A wind swept through the Ruins of Immortality, as if the Paragon Bridge were truly awakening!

The pressure intensified, and the Heavens trembled. The Ruins of Immortality quaked, and soon the entire Mountain and Sea Realm was imperceptibly shaking. No power of expulsion could be felt from the Mountains and Seas, and yet it seemed like a pair of invisible eyes had turned their gaze towards it, as if recalling memories of the past.

That wasn’t all... above the Mountain and Sea Realm, in the 33 Heavens, everything was shaking. Countless cultivators there were shocked, although they had no idea what exactly was happening.

In addition... outside the 33 Heavens, far out in the great expanse, was a world in which several suns were hauling a huge statue. All of the cultivators there were also astonished.

Shockingly, it was also possible to see that in the land of the statue, which was growing inexorably closer to the Mountain and Sea Realm, there was also a bridge hovering in midair. It was also a Paragon Bridge, but it was in ruins, as if it were in place only as a symbol and had lost all of its previous significance.

That bridge also began to tremble.

The voice of woman spoke out, gloomy and serious: “Someone is awakening it....”

Beneath the 33 Heavens, back in the Mountain and Sea Realm, in the Ruins of Immortality in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared. He suddenly flew up to stand atop the Paragon Bridge, where he first lifted his hands up into the air and then slammed

them down onto the surface of the bridge.

“Merge!”

RUMBLE!!

Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge began to descend as the merging quickened. The aura of a Paragon rose up into the air, inundating Meng Hao. Even though this was his own Paragon magic, he was still affected, and coughed up a mouthful of blood.

However, his eyes gleamed with focus. This time, he was going to take away the ruins of the Paragon Bridge no matter what! He was going to merge them with his own Paragon Bridge to make it stronger!

“MERGE!” Meng Hao glowed with azure light as the Bridge Soul of his Paragon Bridge went all out, risking its own life as it controlled the bridge, causing it to descend further in its merging into the original bridge.

This time there was a force of expulsion, which turned into a powerful backlash attack. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and his Paragon Bridge appeared to be on the verge of collapsing.

Apparently, the majesty of the broken bridge would not permit anyone to take control or ownership of it!

“Meat jelly! Parrot! Get out here!” Meng Hao roared. Meng Hao wiped the blood off his lips as the meat jelly and parrot flew out of his bag of holding. As soon as they appeared, their eyes went wide.

“Y-y-you... what are you doing?!” the meat jelly said, trembling. The shattered bridge filled it with a sensation of complete terror. That bridge had once been powerful enough to affect Heaven and Earth, to shake the world. Even though that power was now broken, its aura was still there!

“It's THAT bridge!!” the parrot squawked excitedly. “Suppress it! Fudge! Lord Fifth will definitely help you suppress it!” It transformed into a multi-colored streak of light that shot toward the broken Paragon Bridge. Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge then increased its own pressure and began to descend once more.

The meat jelly gritted its teeth and spread out as it transformed into a flying rope. Apparently, the moronic meat jelly had decided to try to tie the broken Paragon Bridge and Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge together!

Rumbling filled the air as the Paragon Bridges continued to merge together. Meng Hao's cultivation base was in full rotation, exploding with the full might of an Allheaven Dao Immortal. By now, the forced merger had reached the point where the broken bridge and Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge were now almost completely superimposed.

However, it was at this point that the power of a backlash attack, as well as the aura of expulsion both exploded out. Performing an incantation gesture, Meng Hao unleashed his Demon Sealing Hexing magic.

"You're already broken!" he shouted. "You might have been supreme and almighty in the past, but now you're rubble! You're incomplete, not even half of what you used to be. With the will of my Paragon magic, and the form of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, I won't believe that I can't absorb you!" His eyes were shot with blood, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Gritting his teeth, he produced his fourth Nirvana Fruit and pressed it into his forehead.

"Mastiff!" he roared, and the mastiff flew out to form a cape.

"Parrot!" The parrot and the copper mirror instantly formed together into the Battle Weapon. This time, it was not a long blade, but rather a glove! As the glove settled on Meng Hao's hand, he took seven steps forward, building up massive energy and then unleashing a powerful punch!

It was the God-Slaying Fist, Meng Hao's most powerful fist strike, capable of shaking even cultivators of the Dao Realm. His Paragon Bridge was already beyond qualified to absorb the ruins of the bridge. With the power of the fist strike pouring into it, that last final distance between the two was closed!

The two bridges were completely superimposed!

At some point a woman, dressed in white, had appeared up above. It was Paragon Sea Dream, who watched Meng Hao merge the two bridges, a

complex expression on her face.

In the moment that the two bridges superimposed, the broken bridge trembled, and then... cracking sounds could be heard as it collapsed of its own accord! It was just like the World Tree, which destroyed itself rather than look up and see a sky controlled by the Ji Clan. The bridge was aware that it was simply too weak to do anything to prevent itself from being absorbed.

If it were anyone else, the bridge would be able to fight back, even if it were weaker than it was right now. However... Meng Hao was different. He had the will of the Paragon Bridge, and the form of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. He had a Bridge Soul. Essentially... Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge was... the true supreme Paragon Bridge.

Although it was not as paramount as the broken bridge had been, it was more complete!

Since that was the case, there was no way for it to prevent the merging, so the broken bridge chose to use the last bit of its aura to destroy itself! It would rather explode... than be absorbed!

Meng Hao's face flickered as he looked at the broken bridge crumbling and turning into ash. Then his eyes shone with a shocking, icy gleam.

"You would rather destroy yourself than be absorbed, huh...? Well then, go ahead and blow yourself up. Your death will allow my Paragon Bridge to take your place, to be born anew!" Roaring, Meng Hao pushed both hands down onto the Paragon Bridge, which instantly began to shine with brilliant light. Instead of attempting to merge with the broken bridge, the Paragon Bridge would consume it!

It would consume the ancient broken bridge to give itself new life!

In the future, there would be no broken bridge. There would only be Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge!

Rumbling could be heard as the Paragon Bridge voraciously consumed the flying ash that was the remnants of the broken bridge. As it did, its aura rose dramatically, shaking Heaven and Earth!

The Paragon Bridge truly did have new life. It was now no longer illusory in any sense of the word. It was... completely corporeal!

When it became real, the 33 Heavens trembled, and all the bridges there collapsed. The incomplete bridge in the world of the statue, out in the vast expanse, also trembled and collapsed. For all eternity... it would never again exist!!

Back in the Ruins of Immortality, Paragon Sea Dream's soft voice echoed out,

"It used to have a name," she said. "It was called the Heaven Tra—"

"As of now," Meng Hao interrupted, "it's called the Paragon Bridge!" His words were not a show of disrespect. Rather, he didn't want to hear the former name. What he cared about was the current bridge, not what it had been in the past.

Turning, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Paragon Bridge to emit a rumbling drone. The Ruins of Immortality shook as the bridge faded away. Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed to Paragon Sea Dream, then turned and left.

Paragon Sea Dream hovered there, watching Meng Hao make his way off. Her eyes flickered with an absent-minded gleam.

"Back in the day, Big Brother Nine Seals... was just as imposing...."

Chapter 1204: As Of Now, It's Called the Paragon Bridge!

Note from Deathblade: The following is a little anecdote from Er Gen, translated by anonpuffs. Keep in mind that in China, virtually all cell phones are basically pre-paid, although many allow you to overdraw your account.

Note from Er Gen: Let me tell you an embarrassing story, this afternoon I made a phone call to my old lady. There was a notification that the phone card was overdrawn, so I paid 10 yuan (about U.S. \$1.60 at the time) for her. Then I called a friend, and there was another notification about an overdrawn card, so I paid 10 yuan again. I ended up making 4 calls and every time the cards were overdrawn, so I got mad. I ended up paying 10

yuan every time.

Finally, I made yet another call, but outrageously enough they were overdrawn yet again. I got super mad and called customer service and let them have it. After a round of complaining, the customer service agent told me gently, ‘Sir, they actually didn’t owe any money on their accounts, it’s your card that’s overdrawn...’

*

1. The characters for Paramita can also be read “the other shore,” which might be relevant since we’re talking about a bridge here. Also, the “other shore” aspect plays into the meaning of the Buddhist concept of Paramita.

Chapter 1205: Slaughter Appears Again!

Meng Hao had finished collecting debts from the Five Great Holy Lands, the Three Churches and Six Sects. He had visited his old friends and completed his Paragon Bridge. Now, the only debts left were among the Three Great Clans.

Of course, as far as the Li Clan was concerned, Meng Hao felt a bit embarrassed to go there. That left... only the Song and Wang Clans!

“Song Luodan and Wang Mu. Once I collect your debts, then I’ll leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea!” He flew out of the Ruins of Immortality, eyes flickering as he headed toward an asteroid teleportation portal. Actually, deep in his heart, there was still one other place he wanted to visit, right before he left.

Planet North Reed was far larger than Planet South Heaven. It was even larger than Planet East Victory. From a distance, it looked like an enormous blue sphere. Shockingly, it was orbited by three other smaller planetoids.

Those three planetoids housed the Three Great Clans, and even Planet North Reed itself was divided amongst those clans.

All of the sects and schools here were auxiliary branches of those very clans.

Currently, Meng Hao was walking out of a flickering teleportation portal on one of Planet North Reed’s three planetoids, the one that belonged to the Song Clan.

As soon as he appeared, he found himself facing several hundred disciples of the Song Clan. Apparently, they had been waiting for him. Almost as soon as he appeared, one of the Song Clan disciples stepped forward with a bag of holding.

“Our Clan Prince said that all of the extortion money he owes you is here!” the Song Clan cultivator said angrily. Then he threw the bag toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao blinked in response to the way the Song Clan was handling the matter. He was aware that word had spread throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea about him going around collecting debt. It was something that clearly would not endear him to others, so the Song Clan handed over the balance of the debt immediately in order to shoo him away.

But Meng Hao didn't care, so long as he got his money. After scanning the bag of holding with divine sense to confirm the amount inside was correct, he turned to leave. His destination was not the teleportation portal, but rather, the starry sky, and beyond that, the Wang Clan!

Currently, the teleportation portal behind him was flashing continuously as one cultivator after another showed up to watch the scene of Meng Hao collecting debt. However, what was happening now was actually fairly boring. They had hoped to see Meng Hao collecting his debts through force, not just this lukewarm scene of him accepting the money without ado.

Meanwhile, Song Luodan sat on a mountain peak some distance away, watching the events unfold via a secret magic. When he saw that everything was ending, he let out a sigh of relief. Although he felt truly wronged in the whole matter, there was nothing he could do about it. If he could settle his debt with the miserly Meng Hao and make him leave, that was all the better.

However, just as Meng Hao was about to leave, the Song Clan cultivator who had given him the bag of holding, apparently disgusted with what was happening, sarcastically said, "Our Clan Prince said that the Heavens see everything we do. If you go around extorting people like this, you'll get your comeuppance sooner or later!"

The other Song Clan cultivators gaped in shock. Off in the distance, Song Luodan's jaw dropped, and he shot to his feet, rage building up in his face. He was willing to swear an oath that he had never said such words.

He was familiar with Meng Hao's personality, and he knew that uttering words like that would turn the situation into a disaster!

“Dammit!!” he thought, instantly flying off of the top of the mountain. He couldn’t just sit around and watch what was happening; he had to go give Meng Hao an explanation. In order to raise the money he needed to pay back Meng Hao, he had borrowed from virtually every willing party in the sect. In fact, he had even taken out a loan from the sect itself. If all of that was destroyed because of a single sentence, he would be reduced to tears.

Just before Meng Hao left, right before he flew up into the air, he heard the words being spoken and then looked back at the Song Clan cultivator. He also noticed the surrounding rogue cultivators who had come to watch the show, who were all looking on excitedly. There were even some who seemed to want to thank the Song Clan cultivator for speaking up.

“Well, now, isn’t this interesting?” Meng Hao said, smiling. The other members of the Song Clan were trembling, and when they saw him smiling, they edged backward, beads of sweat popping out on their foreheads. “Based on what I know about Song Luodan, he isn’t that stupid. He would either grit his teeth and hand over the money, or grit his teeth and refuse.

“Whatever his choice , he wouldn’t say something like that. It seems... Song Luodan’s position within the Song Clan has become a bit unstable. Well, that doesn’t matter. Since he and I are friends, I might be able to help him out a bit.” His smile grew more radiant, and even a bit bashful and embarrassed.

His smile and his words caused the faces of the surrounding Song Clan cultivators to flicker.

“That’s what the Prince told me to–”

“Song Luodan, get out here!” Meng Hao said suddenly, his voice rumbling like thunder, echoing throughout the entire planetoid.

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, Song Luodan appeared, flashing in his direction as fast as lightning. As soon as he arrived, he waved his sleeve, causing a wild wind to spring up and wrap around the clan member who had spoken moments ago. The man was immediately

sent flying off into the distance, blood spraying out of his mouth, clearly seriously injured.

“Fudge,” he roared. “How dare you try to frame me! Men, arrest him!” The surrounding Song Clan cultivators immediately flew out and grabbed ahold of the man.

Not even taking the time to ask the man who had given the orders for him to speak, Song Luodan spun and looked at Meng Hao, face grim and heart filled with bitterness. He suddenly regretted his earlier decision to try to save face by not meeting Meng Hao in person. If he had, then what had occurred moments ago would never have happened.

Meng Hao looked at Song Luodan with an enigmatic smile, waiting for him to speak.

“I never said that!” Song Luodan grated stiffly.

“I know,” Meng Hao said with a smile. “Actually, since we’re acquainted, why don’t I help you out with this situation? I’ll do it for a great price.”

Song Luodan was about to refuse, but then, his eyes glittered. “How much do you want?”

“Double what was in the bag of holding you just gave me.”

“You’re ruthless! Fine. His name is Song Luoshen, Chosen of the direct bloodline of the Song Clan. He’s trying to steal the position of Dao Child from me. Don’t kill him! Just ruin his reputation!”

Meng Hao chuckled, and then suddenly called out in a voice like thunder, “Song Luoshen! You owe me money! Time to pay me back!”

His voice seemed to contain Heavenly might as it echoed out through the planetoid, causing countless mountains to tremble. A coldly-spoken response drifted in from off in the distance.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, I don’t remember owing you anything. The person who owes you money is Song Luodan.”

“If I say you owe me, then you owe me!” Even as he spoke, Meng Hao took a step forward. His body flickered, and he reappeared off in the

distance, where he launched a punch into the ground. Immediately, the land collapsed, and a figure flew out.

It was a young man, handsome, but with narrow eyes. Originally, those eyes had been glittering with venomous coldness, but now, they were bright with alarm at the sight of Meng Hao's display of domineering might.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, what are you trying to do!?!?" the young man roared. He urgently backed up, and at the same time, dozens of beams of light began to fly out from within the Song Clan. Those would be the powerful experts in charge of guarding the area.

By now, all of the various sects and clans had gotten the news about the way Meng Hao went about collecting debt. The Song Clan didn't want to be any further entangled with him; they simply wanted to get him to leave as quickly as possible.

However, these people had been ordered to stand guard in the area just in case something unexpected happened. Now that they saw Meng Hao making a move, they showed their faces.

"Meng Hao, you've been paid what you were owed, what are you trying to do!?" Roaring shouts could be heard as the dozens of beams of light closed in to protect the young man from being attacked by Meng Hao.

"Song Luodan already paid me," he replied coolly, "but this Song Luoshen hasn't." He waved his right hand, causing a wild wind to spring up and envelop the group. Even as their minds were shaken, Meng Hao strode forward toward Song Luoshen.

"I don't owe you money!!" Song Luoshen cried. He was already filled with regret at trying to use Meng Hao to weaken Song Luodan. However, regret was now useless. As he shot backward, he crushed a jade slip, requesting assistance from the Clan Elders.

"You don't deserve to owe me money, and yet you try to incite a conflict between me and Song Luodan? What a flimsy plan! I really don't understand how someone with an intellect like yours could possibly cause Song Luodan to feel threatened." Shaking his head, Meng Hao waved his

hand toward Song Luoshen, then made a grasping motion, which caused Song Luoshen to fly toward him, trembling.

“Patriarch, save me!!” Song Luoshen screamed. Meng Hao suddenly clenched his left hand into a fist and then punched out into the air next to him with the God-Slaying Fist!

That punch caused the air to collapse. A muffled grunt could be heard as an emaciated, grim-faced old man appeared. He had been attempting to save Song Luoshen, but hadn’t been fast enough. He could now do nothing but watch as Meng Hao grabbed onto Song Luoshen.

“Meng Hao,” he said in a dark tone, “don’t push things too far. The Song Clan doesn’t want to make you an enemy, but you can’t be so excessive!” This man was emanating the aura of the Dao Realm. He was obviously one of the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Song Clan.

Even as he spoke, another Dao Realm aura began to emanate out from the planetoid. Although no one appeared, the aura locked down onto Meng Hao.

Further off on Planet North Reed, another even more terrifying Dao Realm Aura seemed to focus its attention on what was happening.

“The struggles over the position of Song Clan Dao Child have nothing to do with me. However, Song Luoshen clearly plotted against me, and for that, he shall pay the price.” Meng Hao held Song Luoshen in hand and looked steadily at the emaciated old man, completely ignoring his Dao Realm Aura.

The old man glared angrily at Song Luoshen. It was only now that he realized that Song Luoshen had actually taken the initiative to scheme against Meng Hao, and he cursed him for his foolishness. The entire Song Clan had tacitly approved of the way Song Luodan had collected the money he needed to pay Meng Hao, and when those efforts had fallen short the clan itself had been willing to loan him money. It was easy to see from this that generally speaking, the Song Clan had no desire whatsoever to provoke Meng Hao.

But now, this idiot had gone and done exactly that. From the emaciated

old man's perspective, Song Luoshen was simply incurably moronic. If it weren't for the fact that his bloodline was uniquely important to the safety of the clan, he would ignore the matter.

"We will definitely compensate you for this matter," the old man said slowly. Meng Hao smiled and release Song Luoshen. He was just about to speak when, all of a sudden, a tremor ran through him, and he stared blankly over the old man's shoulder.

The old man's eyes widened, and he turned around, but didn't see anything. As he frowned, he could sense Meng Hao's eyes narrowing.

Meng Hao began to pant. Moments ago, he had seen something very bizarre behind the old man. It was a man in a black robe, with long white hair, strolling along through the void.

He had a shocking murderous aura. It was... none other than the man who had walked out of the Paragon magic in the Windswept Realm... the Paragon!

Slaughter!

Chapter 1206: Daoist Magic of Time!

Meng Hao could see the black-robed man, but no one else could. He seemed lonely, with the supreme air of a Paragon, and yet he radiated a boundless murderous aura as he walked past the Song Clan Patriarch and headed out toward the starry sky.

Panting anxiously, Meng Hao completely forgot about the matter of settling accounts. He instantly flashed through the air to follow the black-robed man.

In the Windswept Realm, he had personally watched this man walked out into the void and then vanish. He would never have been able to imagine that he would actually... see him again here.

The emaciated old man frowned. He hadn't seen anything unusual at all; Meng Hao's bizarre reaction caused his eyes to narrow.

"Fellow Daoist Meng..." the old man said.

Almost at the same time, Meng Hao cried out, "Senior, wait for me!" He kept his eyes fixed on the black-robed man, who was strolling off into the distance at incredible speed. Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, the black-robed man paused and then slowly turned his head to glance casually at Meng Hao.

That single glance caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble as if lightning were striking it. It didn't matter that he was an Allheaven Dao Immortal, as of that moment, his entire consciousness felt as if it were sinking into boundless slaughter.

He trembled violently, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. It felt as if some indescribable power were pounding through his mind, simultaneously... wiping away all his memories of the black-robed man!

The rumbling wasn't just affecting Meng Hao. The emaciated old man also started trembling. That was because in the instant that the black-robed man had turned around, he was also able to see him!

That single glance caused blood to spray out of the old man's mouth,

and his Essence aura to grow unstable. His expression was one of shock before it suddenly went blank. His memories of how he had been injured just now, as well as the sight of the black-robed man, were instantly wiped away.

It wasn't just him, it was also the other Dao Realm Patriarch on the planetoid. When the black-robed man turned and became visible, they had caught sight of him. However, his single glance sent their minds spinning, caused them to cough up blood, and made them feel like they were about to explode. It was as if a huge hand were forcibly wiping away everything about the man that existed in their minds.

The same thing happened to the Song Clan's most powerful Patriarch, the one on Planet North Reed itself, who had been watching Meng Hao the entire time. Meng Hao's bizarre behavior had startled him, and when the black-robed man turned around, it caused the Dao Realm Patriarch to cough up several mouthfuls of blood. His memories were also wiped away, no matter what he did to fight back. It was like he was so weak that he couldn't stand up to a single blow.

All of these things take some time to describe, but actually happened in a brief moment. The ordinary clan members' memories were not wiped away because they had never laid eyes on the black-robed man in the first place.

However, they saw Meng Hao and the Patriarchs coughing up blood, which, coupled with the miserable shrieks that echoed from their mouths, made the scene completely bizarre. All of the surrounding Song Clan cultivators gasped.

Meng Hao was the first to regain his senses. His eyes were completely bloodshot as the invisible hand threatened to wipe away his memories of the black-robed man. Apparently, this gaze embodied a paramount Daoist magic. The black-robed man did not wish memories of him to exist in anyone's minds. To ensure that no trace of him was remembered by anyone, he would wipe their minds clean.

However, in the moment that Meng Hao's memories were about to be

wiped away, he roared, and azure light suddenly exploded out of him. The power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal surged out, and the drop of Paragon's blood inside of him seethed. His eyes shone with wild light, and he gritted his teeth as he produced his fourth Nirvana Fruit, then pushed it down into his forehead.

“My memories belong to me for all eternity! If I want them wiped out, that's my decision. Other people... don't have the right or the qualifications to touch my memories!”

He continued to cough up blood as the Nirvana Fruit melted down into him. It caused the azure light to become even more radiant and, combined with the Paragon's blood, made Meng Hao just barely capable of resisting the enormous hand, which he shoved out of his mind.

RUMBLE!

He staggered backward, coughing up another mouthful of blood, but completely clear-headed. He lifted his head up to find the black-robed man looking at him with a surprised expression.

The black-robed man stared at him for a moment, then nodded, as if he approved of Meng Hao's existence. Then he turned and began to walk off into the distance.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and flew after him. He could sense that this man harbored no malice. That gaze from earlier could shake Heaven and Earth, but in actuality... it was apparently some sort of test.

Of those he tested, only those who managed to maintain their memories of him could qualify... to follow him off into the distance.

After a long moment, Meng Hao and the black-robed man were gone, and the emaciated old man from the Song Clan regained his senses, as did the other two Patriarchs.

They quickly communicated with each other via divine sense, and came to the realization that none of them had any memories regarding what had just happened. They only remembered Meng Hao acting strangely.

However, these were Dao Realm experts. The black-robed man might have taken action to wipe away their memories, but he didn't hide that fact. After the three of them considered what had happened, they quickly reached a conclusion.

"We saw some being that we should not have seen...."

"That terrifying entity erased whatever it was that we saw...."

After questioning some of the surrounding disciples, the three Song Clan Dao Realm Patriarchs' hearts sank, and their fear of Meng Hao increased.

From the various clues they had gathered, they came to the conclusion that whatever being it was that had erased their memories must also have some connection to Meng Hao. After all, Meng Hao had caught sight of the man before they had. Therefore... what was written between the lines was that Meng Hao knew that terrifying entity!

"Pass orders down that no members of the Song Clan are to have anything to do with Meng Hao.... He harbors too many terrifying secrets, secrets... that we should not know anything about!" Having made their decision, the three Song Clan Patriarchs officially sent their orders out. As for Song Luoshen, who had dared to provoke Meng Hao, the three Patriarchs actually didn't rebuke him at all. However, the way they ignored him left him feeling very uneasy.

Song Luodan had been watching from off in the distance. He looked thoughtfully in the direction Meng Hao had headed, and realized... that it was the planetoid controlled by the Wang Clan.

Out in the starry sky, the black-robed man didn't take very long strides, and yet every step was like a teleportation. Meng Hao drew on the full power of his cultivation base, and yet was quickly falling behind.

Seeing that he couldn't catch up, he didn't allow himself to get nervous. Instead, he keyed in on the movement of the man's legs. As he watched, he was able to detect that there was a certain cadence to the way he walked. Meng Hao began to imitate it, lifting his feet up and placing them down in a certain way.

Although he wasn't able to tell, the way he was imitating the man caused his own figure to pulse between being blurry and being clear. Every step he took caused the starry sky to seemingly shrink. When his foot landed, the starry sky would return to normal.

Without even realizing it, he was actually matching his steps to the black-robed man's, even catching up. Every time the man lifted his foot up, so did Meng Hao. Every time he stepped down, so did Meng Hao.

Time passed, although Meng Hao wasn't sure how much. On the one hand, it seemed like a moment, but on the other hand, it seemed endless. He was lost in the special cadence of walking, step after step....

Suddenly, the black-robed man stopped walking, and Meng Hao shivered as he awakened from his reverie. He looked around to find that he was still in the vicinity of Planet North Reed, although he had traveled from one of the smaller planetoids to another.

Although the planetoids were some distance away from each other, they weren't that far. In fact, you could even reach from one to another with divine sense. Considering the level of Meng Hao's cultivation base, it would only take a few breaths of time to go from one to another.

But for some reason, he felt as if a long time had just passed, which would seem to indicate that he had traveled for a very long distance. However, the situation seemed to be the exact opposite, which left Meng Hao feeling as if something strange was going on.

By now, he was sure that the state he had been in just now and that special way of walking was definitely some strange Daoist magic, and an unusual one at that. However, the facts of the matter made Meng Hao feel as if... he had overestimated the walking technique.

He couldn't say that he was disappointed, but he did sigh inwardly. At this point he turned to look back in the direction of the Song Clan's planetoid, and suddenly, he began to shake. His eyes went wide with disbelief and shock.

His whole body shook; it was as if all of the amazing and shocking things he had experienced in his entire life put together weren't nearly as

stunning as what he was seeing now....

He had seen many astonishing things in his years, but as of this moment, what he was seeing... was truly unbelievable!

His mind felt as if it were being struck by a million lightning bolts. His jaw dropped, and he stared in the direction of the Song Clan's planetoid as the flicker of teleportation could be seen and a person emerged from the teleportation portal.

He was handsome and had the air of a scholar. He even seemed to glow with azure light. He watched this scholar be handed a bag of holding by the Song Clan cultivators, and then saw the young man cry out in a thunderous voice.

"Song Luodan, get out here!" What he was seeing was almost like a vision... of himself!!

He watched himself move forward and grab Song Luoshen. He saw the emaciated man make his appearance, and then saw the black-robed man appear. He saw the test administered, then saw the black-robed man strolling out into the starry sky. Then... he saw himself following, all the way... until the other black-robed man and the other Meng Hao superimposed with their real selves.

Meng Hao was shaking, and great waves of shock roared through his head.

"That walking technique wasn't too slow," he murmured. "It was too fast! So fast... that it can cause you to travel through time.... I can't believe that I actually walked backward... for one incense stick's worth of time!" The bizarreness of the Daoist magic caused his mind to rumble with sounds like thunder.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao turned to look at the black-robed man, who was now looking down toward an area down below, situated between a mountain and a river.

Meng Hao's heart was gripped with shock as he also looked down at the foot of that mountain, where there was a bamboo forest. Inside the

bamboo forest was a vulgar-looking old man, sitting there cross-legged.

Directly in front of the old man was a young man, who happened to be none other than Wang Mu.

Chapter 1207: Grievous News!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he looked at the black-robed man, within whose eyes had suddenly appeared... gentleness.

That gentleness was not directed toward Wang Mu, but rather, to the old man sitting in front of him. 1

That old man was a stranger to Meng Hao; he had never seen him before. However, the moment he laid eyes on him, Meng Hao got the feeling that there was something terrifyingly powerful about him.

Time passed; the black-robed man and Meng Hao both hovered there, looking down.

After a while... the black-robed man suddenly took a step forward. Meng Hao imitated him subconsciously, and when his foot landed, the world seemed to momentarily become magnified and his vision blurred momentarily. When it became clear, both the black-robed man and Meng Hao were now standing in the bamboo forest next to the old man and Wang Mu.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, but apparently Wang Mu hadn't the slightest idea any of this was happening.

"Alright," the old man said coolly, "this session of cultivation is done. Come back tomorrow." He waved his right hand, and Wang Mu staggered backward. He looked up with an unyielding gleam in his eyes.

"I want to defeat Wang Tengfei!!"

"Then you need to work harder at cultivation," the old man replied, his voice echoing out. Wang Mu once again staggered backwards uncontrollably, then vanished.

After Wang Mu disappeared, complete silence fell over the bamboo forest. For some reason, the ambiance of the area felt somewhat eerie to Meng Hao. Furthermore, within the silence, a slight droning sound began to rise.

Soon, Meng Hao realized that flying towards them from within the

bamboo forest was... a cloud of mosquitos!

They didn't seem any larger than ordinary mosquitos, but for some reason, when Meng Hao looked at them, his heart trembled, and a sense of grave crisis exploded up within him.

These were definitely not ordinary mosquitos, of that Meng Hao was certain. The kind of aura that was emanating from them was something he had never sensed on any beast before.

It was an aura filled with murderous intent, and a towering brutality. Most importantly, there was a sensation of profound ancientness. Based on the level of Meng Hao's current cultivation base, he gradually reached a conclusion that caused his heart to tremble!

"These mosquitos are... more ancient than the Mountain and Sea Realm itself!" He began to pant as he stared at the mosquitos, especially one in particular that was completely gold and flying in the lead. Boundless ripples spread out from it as it flew directly toward Meng Hao and the black-robed man.

It then began to circulate around the black-robed man, buzzing with what seemed to be both joy and grief. From the way it flew around him, it seemed to want to get closer to him, and yet was separated from him, as if by some invisible barrier that it could not cross. 2

Meng Hao suddenly realized that the black-robed man seemed to have the same expression of both joy and grief.

It was at this point that a sigh could be heard coming from the skinny old man. Although he normally looked vulgar, right now, he seemed filled with complicated, melancholy emotions. He suddenly turned and looked directly at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's mind trembled. It was as if that gaze were a sharp sword that was currently stabbing into his mind, attempting to shred his divine sense into nothing. Azure light suddenly sprang up, and the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal exploded out. Not only did it shield his mind, it also transformed a portion of his cultivation base into a swordlike gaze which stabbed back into the eyes of the old man.

“Eee?” the old man said, eyes flickering. Moments later, everything returned to normal. The old man looked thoughtfully at Meng Hao for a moment before turning his complicated gaze toward the black-robed man.

Obviously, he was completely aware that both Meng Hao and the black-robed man were standing there!

“You....” the old man said softly. Apparently, that was all he could say before he was at a loss for words, as the complex feelings within him grew stronger.

After a moment of silence, the black-robed man suddenly spoke, his voice hoarse, cold, and ancient. “Where is he?”

Although the three words he spoke were completely ordinary in nature, when spoken by him, they were filled with a shocking murderous aura, as if this man were fundamentally... formed from a murderous aura.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Although he had no idea who this black-robed man was, if he didn’t understand what was going on between him and the old man, then he had no right to have practiced cultivation to his current level.

“They know each other!!

“We’re in the Wang Clan, and this old man is one of Wang Mu’s teachers. He also knows Wang Tengfei. That means that it’s very likely that he is also a member of the Wang Clan!!

“This black-robed Paragon is very mysterious, and clearly cannot be a cultivator from the modern era. He’s existed for ages, and certainly comes from before the time when the Mountain and Sea Realm existed. That much is obvious because of what happened with those ancient mosquitos.

“In that case, since they know each other, this old man....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. In his past dealings with the Wang Clan, he had always felt their magical techniques to be bizarre. Furthermore, there was something very mysterious and extraordinary about their bloodline.

Even as Meng Hao’s mind spun, the skinny old man thought for a

moment and then spoke in a hoarse voice that seemed to be filled with reminiscence.

“Back then, he left, and never came back....”

The black-robed man closed his eyes for a moment. Finally, he opened them, and asked, “What about her?”

“They left together. She never came back either.” The old man sighed. Within the complicated gaze he leveled at the black-robed man was hidden astonishment and disbelief. Unable to hold back, he finally asked the question that burned in his mind. “You... back then, didn’t you dissipate?”

The black-robed man shook his head. Declining to say anything else, he turned to leave....

“Wang....” The old man only spoke one word before stopping, as if he wasn’t sure exactly how to address the man.

However, that single word caused Meng Hao’s mind to tremble. He looked at the old man, then at the black-robed man. The character ‘Wang 王,’ had two meanings of course. One carried the meaning of a king. The other... caused Meng Hao to gasp.

“He’s... a member of the Wang Clan! The Wang Clan Patriarch?” Meng Hao felt his thoughts going wild.

“If he’s a Wang Clan Patriarch, then that means... the Wang Clan definitely did not originate in the Mountain and Sea Realm. They... existed in the time of the Immortal World!” His eyes went wide, and he moved to follow the black-robed man as he left.

He took a step, and his vision blurred. When it cleared, he was with the black-robed man back up in the starry sky. The black-robed man hovered there thoughtfully, before finally looking out into the void.

It was as if his gaze could pierce the 33 Heavens and see the expanse beyond, including the butterflies dragging the land mass, and the suns pushing the statue, as they rumbled in the direction of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

“They’re almost here....” the black-robed man murmured, his voice so icy that the void around him grew colder. That was not done intentionally, it was merely a result of his murderous aura.

He looked off into the distance and then began to walk. Each step he took seemed without end, and Meng Hao hurried to keep up. However, in the space of a few breaths, the man was so far away... that he knew it would be impossible to catch up to him!

Meng Hao knew that he couldn’t catch up because the man didn’t want him to. Urgently, he called out, “Senior, who are you, sir?”

“A person... who probably shouldn’t be here,” was the icy response. The black-robed man was now further off in the distance.

Meng Hao was the type of person to seize every opportunity. As the saying went, he would pluck feathers from a passing goose. Although he was awestruck by the black-robed man, he gritted his teeth and said, “Senior, look, we are bound by ties of destiny. Could you please teach me some of your Daoist magic, Senior? I mean, the reason you’re here has something to do with me, right...?”

The black-robed man paused in midstep. It seemed he rarely encountered cultivators the likes of Meng Hao.

“Spatial Bending. If you master that, and we meet again... then I guess I can pass on to you the secret to... Call the Wind.” The black-robed man’s voice drifted out behind him as he vanished into the starry sky. 3

There was no way for Meng Hao to catch up. However, several different emotions could be seen on his face as he looked at the man leaving, and in fact, his eyes began to shine.

“So he really is a Patriarch of the Wang Clan...” The magic of Call the Wind was something Meng Hao had seen Wang Mu unleash. He had always felt it to be extraordinary, but had never been able to acquire it. 4

“Ah well, it is what it is. Wang Mu, you owe me money, but now I’m in no hurry to get it back. Having Karma connecting me to you is the same as having Karma with the Wang Clan!” Heart filled with decisiveness, he

turned, closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them and took a step. Much the same as before, he slipped into a strange state as he began to experiment with walking in that strange, prescribed fashion.

“This magic is called Spatial Bending, huh...? It seems that this is just the first step, a way to bend space-time....” Meng Hao was very excited. He could already think of many ways that this Daoist magic could be used in magical combat.

In fact, if he got familiar enough with it, perhaps he could even use it to travel through time!

At this thought, a strange look appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as he walked off into the distance.

Time passed as he walked in that special fashion for several days. During that time, he didn't worry about collecting any debts, nor did he stop by any asteroid teleportation portals. He was separated from the world, alone as he traversed the starry sky, getting familiar with the walking technique.

In the middle of his enlightenment, the transmission jade slip within his bag of holding vibrated many times. However, he didn't notice that, as he was fully immersed in the strange state.

He had no idea, but during those several days, someone he knew was traveling all around looking for him, engulfed in grief.

That person went to Planet South Heaven, and then to Planet East Victory. He scoured the entirety of the Fang Clan, and then went to the Song Clan, to Mount Sun, and any other place where Meng Hao might have been found.

Unfortunately... that person did not find Meng Hao.

“Is this the working of fate...? Is he fated... to not be able to see her one last time?” The person searching for Meng Hao was Pill Demon!!

His expression was one of grief, and he sighed constantly. Eventually, he gave up the search and returned to the Mount Kunlun....

Another three days passed, and eventually Meng Hao awoke from that strange state. His eyes shone with the glow of augury, and then gradually began to flicker with joy. During the past few days, he had grown much more familiar with that strange walking technique.

It was only after awakening that Meng Hao noticed that on the transmission jade slip in his bag of holding, there were several hundred messages that had unexpectedly accumulated during the past few days....

After scanning the messages with divine sense, his mind began to rumble as if with thunder, and his body shook as if it were being struck by lightning. In fact, he almost couldn't believe what was happening!

*

1. We've seen this old man in the Wang Clan on two different occasions. The first time was when Wang Mu was introduced in chapter 806. He also had a cameo in chapter 964, when Wang Tengfei awakened his bloodline.
2. In Renegade Immortal, Wang Lin had a pet mosquito. Maybe you could even say that it was the mastiff of that story.
3. Spatial Bending is the name of a magic that Wang Lin used in Renegade Immortal. It didn't do exactly the same thing as this Daoist magic, but was very similar.
4. Call the Wind is something that has come up several times. Wang Mu used it, as did the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch back on Planet South Heaven. It's another of the techniques Wang Lin used in Renegade Immortal.

Chapter 1208: Slaying Ji Dongyang Again!

Although the messages in the jade slip were all from different people, the words were virtually the same!

“Chu Yuyan’s soul is rapidly dispersing. Come to the Kunlun Society!”

They all said the same thing!

He received messages from his mother, father and sister, from Patriarch Shoudao... even from Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, and Sun Hai....

The greatest number of messages came from... Pill Demon!

In addition, there was one message that had come through on the first day that Meng Hao had slipped into his strange trance of walking. It had come from Chu Yuyan.

“Meng Hao.... I hope that you and Xu Qing can have a safe and peaceful life together....” That single message caused Meng Hao’s heart to feel as if it were being stabbed with blades.

Meng Hao was trembling; he couldn’t quite tell what he was feeling at the moment. However, one thing he was sure about was that if Chu Yuyan’s soul was dispersing, it couldn’t be an accident. There had to be more to the story.

He had no time to sit there thinking. Nor was he even sure what exactly he should be thinking about. Only one thought filled his mind, and that was that he did not want Chu Yuyan to perish.

“How could this have happened...?” he murmured, transforming into a colorful streak of light that shot toward the nearest asteroid teleportation portal at high speed.

As soon as he appeared there, people recognized him and their faces flickered. Many of them were well-aware of how everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea had been looking for him over the past few days.

Immediately, sounds of discussion could be heard:

“Did you hear about Meng Hao’s old flame Chu Yuyan from the Kunlun

Society...? Her soul is dispersing....”

“These past few days, everyone has been trying to find him, but sadly, nobody could. And now here he is....”

“Well, he deserves it with that vicious personality of his. A lot of people are happy to see this happening.”

Meng Hao blasted forward like the wind, but he could still hear everyone talking, and their words stabbed at his heart like sharp swords. Suddenly, he turned his head, sweeping over them with his gaze. Rumbling sounds could be heard, and one cultivator after another coughed up blood and staggered backward, their cultivation bases collapsing as they let out miserable shrieks.... Those were the cultivators who had just spoken biting words.

On any other occasion, Meng Hao wouldn't even have acknowledged them. But now, in the throes of deep anxiety, the words they spoke crossed his bottom line.

Rumbling could be heard as he shot toward one particular destination. It was none other than the teleportation portal leading to the Kunlun Society.

However, just before he reached it, a dozen or so figures suddenly emerged from the crowd to block his path.

Based on the ripples emanating from their cultivation bases, it was obvious that these people were from the Ji Clan. Furthermore, the person leading them was... Ji Dongyang!!

Who knew how long he had been here, and now, in Meng Hao's most anxious moment, he was leading members of the Ji Clan to prevent Meng Hao from entering the teleportation portal.

“Well well, if it isn't Brother Meng? What's gotten you so anxious?” Ji Dongyang laughed heartily, eyes shining with a strange light. He almost seemed to be eyeing prey, as if he were trying to lure that prey in a certain direction, to control its growth and development.

“The dispersal of Chu Yuyan's soul has really given me a good

opportunity to domesticate my prey.” Ji Dongyang’s smile grew more radiant, and the eyes of the Ji Clan cultivators behind him glittered with killing intent.

“Screw off!” Meng Hao roared, his face grim and his voice echoing like thunder. The Ji Clan cultivators were instantly enraged, and shot directly toward him.

“What gall! Our Clan Prince allowed you to stop and chat! How dare you say rude things!”

“Scram!” Meng Hao’s expression didn’t change at all as he performed an incantation gesture. Everything rumbled, and the starry sky shook. The entire asteroid vibrated as an amorphous tempest shot out toward the members of the Ji Clan.

As he flew through the air, everything around him shook violently. The tempest was like a huge mouth, bellowing in rage at the Ji Clan cultivators. Blood sprayed out of their mouths and they were sent tumbling backward. There were even a few who directly exploded, killed in body and spirit.

Meng Hao had already reached the point of disregarding everything else!

“Brother Meng, did I offend you or something? All I did was call out a greeting, and yet you dared to kill the people of my Ji Clan?” Ji Dongyang’s face was grim as he took a step forward, causing explosive waves of qi to roll out in all directions. Shockingly, they transformed into a shield of light, which... completely blocked the way to the Kunlun Society teleportation portal.

The surrounding cultivators looked on silently, and even backed up. They looked at the shield with mixed feelings. Anyone who was watching this scene would be able to see what the Ji Clan was overtly attempting to do.

In Meng Hao’s moment of deepest anxiety, when he wanted nothing more than to get to the Kunlun Society, the Ji Clan actually blocked his path, in order to delay him even further. All of it was to make Meng Hao even more anxious than before.

In any other circumstance, he could shrug it off. But now, when he wasn't even certain whether Chu Yuyan was alive or dead, for the Ji Clan to do something like this... caused even the surrounding cultivators to feel that they were being excessive.

And yet, some of them were happy to delight in the misfortunes of others, and their eyes glinted wickedly.

Seeing that his way to the teleportation portal was being blocked caused Meng Hao's eyes to burst with killing intent. Without stopping, he charged forward like a meteor directly toward Ji Dongyang.

As he closed in, Ji Dongyang snorted inwardly, performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then shot backward, unexpectedly passing through the protective shield. Next, Meng Hao slammed bodily into the shield.

A huge boom could be heard; Meng Hao's fleshly body was comparable to a magical item, and his attack power was backed by the cultivation base of an Allheaven Dao Immortal. He was like a sharp arrow that instantly pierced through the shield.

As it shattered, he continued on toward the teleportation portal like a lightning bolt. He took no time to get entangled with Ji Dongyang; his only goal was to get to the Kunlun Society as quickly as possible.

However, just when Meng Hao was about to step into the teleportation portal, cracking sounds could be heard as it... shattered into pieces!

Ji Dongyang smiled at Meng Hao as if he were looking at a trapped animal.

"Brother Meng, how could you be so rash?" he said. "I wasn't actually trying to stop you, I had just set up some defenses around the teleportation portal because it was too old, and in need of repair. It was already on the verge of shattering. See how much I care about you? I didn't want any problems to occur if you stepped into it, that's why I blocked your way.

"Well, there's no need to thank me. It was really the right thing to do."

Meng Hao trembled, slowly turning around, his murderous aura exploding up. Ji Dongyang continued to smile as he slowly backed up.

“Brother Meng, I did all of this with the best of intentions. I’ll take my leave now, but don’t worry, we’ll have plenty of time to get to know each other better in the future, and also... to build up plenty of Karma between us....” Smiling mysteriously, his body began to fade away.

“You want Karma? I’ll give you some Karma!” Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his murderous aura grew stronger as he shot in a beeline toward Ji Dongyang.

He moved as fast as lightning, using the exact same bizarre walking technique that he had just spent the past several days getting familiar with!

None of the onlookers could see anything strange about it, not even Ji Dongyang. He continued to smile as he faded away.

Meng Hao rumbled through the air, making a grasping motion with his right hand. Immediately, the copper mirror began to materialize. Before it could even become fully clear, it changed shape, wrapping around Meng Hao’s hand, wriggling into the shape of... a long, pitch-black sword!!

It was a wicked blade, like the weapon of a Devil, and it instantly slashed down toward the virtually invisible Ji Dongyang.

However, the direction of the slash was not the position in which Ji Dongyang was vanishing, but rather, the space in front of that!

As the blade slashed down, Meng Hao took another step. All of a sudden, all of the onlookers experienced something bizarre.

Suddenly, everything split apart as two different periods of time appeared in front of their eyes. They were like mirror images that twisted... and then turned into a strange vision.

Within that vision, the teleportation portal which had just collapsed... twisted and returned to a state of wholeness. Different versions of Ji Dongyang and Meng Hao could now be seen, like reflections. The reflection of Ji Dongyang had exactly the same expression as before, and

was saying the same things. Everyone could see exactly what had just happened moments ago. Then, Ji Dongyang's reflection began to move back to the location where he began vanishing, and also, toward the place where Meng Hao was slashing the sword down.

It was almost as if Ji Dongyang were personally delivering himself up to Meng Hao's blade. Meng Hao's Battle Weapon slashed through the reflection of Ji Dongyang, which didn't stop, but rather, continued on to the vanishing Ji Dongyang, with whom it then merged.

At the same time, the teleportation portal collapsed, and Meng Hao... said the same cold words he had spoken before. Then he shot forward, formed the Battle Weapon, slashed out, and merged with his true form.

All of it happened very quickly, and made people confused as to what they were actually seeing. Everyone was shocked and dazzled.

When the true forms of Meng Hao and Ji Dongyang merged with their reflections, Meng Hao looked the same as before. However, Ji Dongyang, who was fading away, suddenly let out a bloodcurdling scream. His blurry figure was then separated into two parts!!

"What Daoist magic is that!?!?" he roared in disbelief. Then the two parts of him faded away.

The only thing that remained behind was an echoing voice filled with terror and astonishment,

An injury inflicted within the flow of time, which then merged with the present!

Meng Hao had used the strange walking technique to come up... with a battle tactic that was perfectly suited to him!

I twist time, giving me the power to go back into the past and slash you with my blade. When your reflection merges with your true form, then that injury... will become a reality!

The surrounding cultivators all gasped. If you added all these people together, the types of magical techniques they had seen collectively throughout their lifetimes were vast. And yet... none of them had ever

seen anything as unbelievable as what they had just witnessed.

Chapter 1209: Mountains Have No Worries

A slash in the past was equally fatal in the present. A Timeshift magic like that was similar to the Time magic that Meng Hao already used, and yet it was far, far different.

One was the root, the other was the lilypad!

As Ji Dongyang faded away, Meng Hao's body flickered as he changed course toward another teleportation portal. Because of Ji Dongyang and how he had obstructed Meng Hao's path, he now had to waste even more time finding another teleportation portal to the Kunlun Society!

Almost as soon as he materialized out of that teleportation portal, he could see the Kunlun Society.

It was a cloud-wreathed Immortal mountain, boundless and majestic, filled with singing of birds and the fragrance of flowers. It was like a celestial paradise, and at first glance, nothing about it seemed out of the ordinary. However, on one of the mountain's tallest peaks, thunder and lightning crashed. Further up above, black clouds seethed, seemingly incompatible with their surroundings.

As soon as he saw that mountain peak, Meng Hao also caught sight of a figure there who seemed to be offering sacrifices. Every flick of his sleeve would cause colors to flash, and rumbling booms to echo out.

He was an old man with whom Meng Hao was unfamiliar. However, at that man's side was someone who Meng Hao knew well. It was... Pill Demon!

Meng Hao's heart began to thump, and he instantly took to flight in the direction of that mountain peak. His arrival instantly attracted the attention of the disciples of the Kunlun Society. Furthermore, because of how he charged in, countless disciples flew out to intercept him, and numerous streams of divine sense converged on him.

"Let him come!" an ancient voice called out just as the numerous spell

formations of the Kunlun Society were about to activate. It came from none other than the old man who was currently fighting back against the powerful vortex up above. Next to him was Pill Demon, who looked over at Meng Hao with mixed feelings, and sighed.

Meng Hao flew as fast as he could. In the blink of an eye, he had spanned the distance to appear in the air above the mountain peak, directly in front of Pill Demon and the old man.

As soon as he appeared, a tremor ran through his body because of what he saw on top of the mountain. It was... a jade coffin!

Numerous Kunlun Society disciples were arrayed around the coffin, their faces filled with grief. They sat there cross-legged, as if they were trying to come up with some sort of way... to resurrect the person in the coffin!

“You’re too late...” Pill Demon said in a quiet, hoarse voice. “Yesterday at dawn... her physical soul dispersed.

“I asked the Patriarch to come help re-converge the spiritual links to Chu Yuyan’s soul. Unfortunately... he was unable to re-form that which has dissipated.”

Meng Hao was shaking, and his mind roared. What Pill Demon had just said almost didn’t seem to register as he stared at the coffin, and Chu Yuyan inside. She almost seemed to be sleeping.

Even now that he was here, Meng Hao felt that all of this was too sudden. It was so sudden that he couldn’t accept it. It seemed impossible.

“How could this have happened....” he murmured. Stabs of pain filled his heart as he approached the coffin. Immediately, the surrounding Kunlun Society disciples’ eyes went wide with rage.

“Screw off! You don’t qualify to come here!”

“Are you Meng Hao? The man Junior Sister Chu could never forget about is you? You don’t deserve to be standing here!”

“Heartless, unethical people like you are prohibited from defiling the corpse of Elder Sister Chu!!”

These Kunlun Society disciples were people who had developed friendships with Chu Yuyan during her time in the Kunlun Society. Some were her Sisters, others were people who admired her. To see Meng Hao show up here when they were so heartbroken caused them to immediately vent their rage.

When the words hit Meng Hao's ears, his heart twinged with intense pain. As he stepped forward silently, a young man burst out from the crowd to stand in front of him, eyes bloodshot. Enraged, he yelled, "Are you a man or not? You knew how Chu Yuyan felt about you. You knew, and yet you heartlessly refused her! What do you think you're doing here now? Screw the hell off!"

The young man extended his right hand, performed an incantation gesture and pointing toward Meng Hao. A magical technique immediately materialized and shot toward Meng Hao.

His action caused other disciples to immediately make moves of their own. Meng Hao didn't respond at all, nor did he dodge their attacks. He just kept walking forward, surrounded by booming sounds. Finally, Pill Demon shouted, "Stay your hands! Let him pass. Nobody qualifies more than him to see Yan'er!"

His voice crashed like thunder, booming out in all directions. Chu Yuyan's fellow disciples immediately ceased attacking. Glaring at Meng Hao, they began to file past him as they returned to their places, filled with rage and grief. As they passed, all of them made various biting comments.

"Chu Yuyan waited for you for years, until she finally perished," one woman said icily. "What a waste!"

"I'm not sure why the link to Junior Sister Chu's soul suddenly dispersed. But I do know that when she returned recently she was seriously injured! She never fully recovered from those injuries. Don't tell me you're unaware of why they occurred!"

"Meng Hao, Meng Hao.... It won't matter how famous you get in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, don't you ever forget for all eternity that you owe this woman far, far too much."

Their words were like razor-sharp swords against which there was no possible defense. It didn't matter how powerful his fleshly body was, he could do nothing to prevent them from piercing deep into his heart.

His insides ached, and his face was ashen as he silently walked forward. He let the people say what they wished to say as he neared the coffin and then looked down at Chu Yuyan laying inside.

She wore a long white garment, and her countenance was beautiful. Her skin was so delicate it seemed that a breeze could shatter it. If it weren't for the fact that she was completely devoid of any color of blood, Meng Hao might think that she actually was sleeping.

However, the aura of death on her made the difference between life and death very clear. It was like the difference between Yin and Yang, boundless and infinite.

His mind was a blank as he stared down at her. He had never imagined that a day like this would come.... Back in the Nine Seas God World, something similar had happened, but in the end, Chu Yuyan didn't die.

Now, though... Meng Hao lifted a trembling hand and placed it on Chu Yuyan's forehead. After sending some divine sense into her, he began to shake even harder.

"Dead...." he murmured. His heart ached as he recalled an image from the past. It was a scene in which Chu Yuyan stood next to Wang Tengfei, as if they were a celestial couple. 1

Next, he saw Chu Yuyan and himself in the volcano, after which came everything that happened in the Violet Fate Sect. Later, they saw each other again in the Southern Domain, when he and Xu Qing got married. Chu Yuyan had been there, a complex expression in her eyes. Although she wore a smile on her face, that smile only hid her silent weeping.

All of those were memories that he would keep in his mind forever.

Proud. That was Chu Yuyan. When she realized that Meng Hao hadn't picked her, she chose to leave. She thought that she could forget, but later, when she looked back at everything that had occurred, she had realized

something.

You can choose not to fall in love with me. But I... have only two choices: fall in love with you, or fall in love with you harder.

That was why, when she saw Meng Hao again in the Ninth Sea, she was actually very happy and content. No matter how she seemed on the surface, in her heart, those were wonderful times. Back then, she had wished that things could go on like they had for a bit longer. She hadn't hoped for an eternity, only that time would slow down for just a little bit.

Therefore, when she saw Meng Hao fighting so hard in the Windswept Realm, when she heard his unyielding roar, she didn't hesitate or even think about what to do. In a moment which wasn't appropriate for her to make her breakthrough, she... risked her own cultivation base and even... risked the chance of being seriously injured.

At that time, she didn't consider what consequences there might be, she only considered... how to help Meng Hao.

And so she did what she did, even though Meng Hao hadn't spared her a second glance at the time...

"What a dummy.... Perhaps the reason he loves Xu Qing is because she's a dummy too...." That was what Chu Yuyan thought to herself as she sighed and stepped into the vortex after the events in the Windswept Realm.

Meng Hao's face grew more and more pale as he thought about everything. Chu Yuyan's smile seemed to occupy all of his memories about her, and all of a sudden, Meng Hao felt as if his heart... were cracking open.

Everything that she had done caused deep regret to well up from deep inside of him.... It was a regret so profound that it ensured he would never be able to forget this woman, not for the rest of his life.

"How could this have happened...?" he murmured, coughing up some blood.

It was at this point that a cold, enraged voice echoed out like thunder

from up above.

“Meng Hao, she chose you, so I wished you well.... I hoped that she would be happy and blessed....

“But how could you be so callous, so heartless!?”

“If you didn’t love her, why did you have to encourage her? If you didn’t choose her, why give her hope...? Why... did you have to steal her away from me!?!?”

“MENG HAO!!” The voice was filled with endless fury, fury mixed with grief. As it descended from the sky, an enormous figure appeared up above. He had stars on his forehead, and it was none other than... the man who had awoken the bloodline of the Gods... Wang Tengfei!!

He roared furiously, causing colors to flash in the sky as he shot down like a meteor, heading directly toward Meng Hao. As he did, he clenched his hand into a fist which he struck out at Meng Hao’s chest. Meng Hao didn’t fight back as Wang Tengfei’s thunderous voice slammed into his ears.

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao’s mouth, and his face became even whiter. It wasn’t that he didn’t have any feelings for Chu Yuyan. However, between her and Xu Qing, he cared for Xu Qing more.

That didn’t mean that he wanted to treat Chu Yuyan coldly. Deep in his heart, he wanted her to be happy. He even wished that she could somehow forget about him, and find her own path to happiness.

It was something he had never really taken the time to think about before, about whether or not... he had been selfish. But now, looking down at Chu Yuyan’s corpse, hearing Wang Tengfei rage, Meng Hao’s heart tore apart. Within that pain, he finally realized that he truly had been selfish.

His voice nothing more than a murmur, he said, “Mountains have no worries, ’til hit with snowy flurries; waters feel no woe, ’til the winds do gust and blow....” 2

1. Can you believe that it was in Chapter 35 that Chu Yuyan came to take Wang Tengfei away from the Reliance Sect?
2. Here's an alternate translation of the poem: The mountains have not a care, yet the snows whiten their hair; water feels not the world's woe, yet its face wrinkles when winds blow.

Chapter 1210: Using Karma to Track the Soul

BOOM!

Wang Tengfei's eyes were crimson as he launched a full-force attack, which slammed into Meng Hao, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. Despite the fact that Wang Tengfei was likewise hit with a backlash attack, he didn't seem to care. Roaring, he flew back to attack again.

"So you also know mountains have no worries, 'til struck by snowy flurries; waters feel no woe, 'til the winds gust and blow!!" The stabbing pain Wang Tengfei felt in his heart was not any less than Meng Hao's.

He had loved Chu Yuyan from the very beginning, and that had never changed. However... he had been too proud. Back in the early days, his pride had allowed him to turn a blind eye to her. He thought that if he could just defeat Meng Hao, if he could somehow get stronger and stronger, then it would be possible to sacrifice everything else... including Chu Yuyan!

But when he lost everything, he finally realized, to his bitterness, that he truly had nothing. From that moment on, he began to wish that Chu Yuyan could simply be happy, and live a life of laughter and smiles.

Many years went by, and he believed himself to have forgotten his love from the past. But then one day he emerged from secluded meditation to hear from his fellow clan members about what was happening with Chu Yuyan. He had then done everything in his power to come here. In the moment he arrived, he saw Meng Hao, then completely lost control and exploded with violence.

"If you didn't care about her then why did you have to steal her from me!?!? MENG HAO!!" Roaring, Wang Tengfei attacked again. Meng Hao didn't respond. He stood there trembling, his heart in pieces. Wang Tengfei's words slammed into him like bolts of lightning.

He didn't raise a hand to fight back. Wang Tengfei battered him with

one fist after another. In Meng Hao's mind, this was all his fault. The debt he owed was too profound, and he felt deep regret.... He regretted everything from the past, and now knew the mistakes he had made. He had never realized how deeply, how severely he had affected others.

"I'm sorry..." he murmured bitterly. Although the words were spoken quietly, when Wang Tengfei heard them, he stopped in place. His fists dropped to his sides, and he began to weep.

Meng Hao walked back to the coffin and looked at the beautiful Chu Yuyan laying there as if slumbering. Tears streaming down his face, he reached up and gently touched her forehead with his right hand.

The tears rolled off his face, dropping down onto Chu Yuyan's cheek....

A moment later, he looked up at Pill Demon and the ancient old man hovering next to him in midair.

"There's something off about Chu Yuyan's death. Tell me why, immediately!" He spoke slowly, one word at a time, and by the time he reached the final words, his voice boomed deafeningly, causing colors to flash in the sky and a sweeping wind to spring up. The entire Kunlun Society began to shake violently.

As he spoke, his cultivation base exploded with power, pushing him to the point where he could slaughter Dao Realm cultivators. Right now, he could cut down 1-Essence Dao Realm experts, could cause 2-Essences cultivators to tremble, and could even take on... 3-Essences Dao Lords!

Pill Demon gaped in astonishment and turned to look at the ancient man next to him. That old man had not mentioned anything suspicious about Chu Yuyan's death. Pill Demon had assumed that it was because after reaching Immortal Ascension, Chu Yuyan's foundation was unstable, which led to the dispersal of her soul.

Pill Demon wasn't the only one to stare in shock. Wang Tengfei's eyes went wide, and the surrounding Kunlun Society disciples all looked up at the old man, astonished.

This old man was one of the Patriarchs of the Kunlun Society. He looked

down at Meng Hao and sighed. He had long since heard about how powerful Meng Hao was, but now that he could see it for himself, he realized that Meng Hao was able to see the clues on Chu Yuyan's corpse.

"Her spiritual soul is lost....

"When she returned last time, she seemed normal, but the truth of the matter was that she had already lost her spiritual soul. The only thing that remained behind was her physical soul. She could only last for so long in such a state. Without the support of her spiritual soul, in the end... her physical soul dispersed.

"That is why she died, and is also why I was unable to reverse the situation and resurrect her...."

The old man spoke in a low voice, and uttered no lies. He went on to explain the full process of how he had attempted to treat Chu Yuyan.

Meng Hao was trembling. Because of the level of his cultivation base, he was well aware of the ramifications of a person losing their spiritual soul. With only the physical soul remaining, one had no foundation, and at any time, that person could lose touch with reality and begin to disperse into death.

From the moment Chu Yuyan had returned, she had begun to weaken. With every day that passed she struggled against death, but unfortunately, there was absolutely nothing she could do.

She could only wait until her physical soul dispersed, and the day of her death arrived....

She knew that she was dying, and therefore... had sent that final message to Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao.... I hope that you and Xu Qing can have a safe and peaceful life together...."

Meng Hao's eyes were completely bloodshot, and he shook from the increasingly intense pain in his heart. Based on how high his cultivation base was, it was easy for him to inspect Chu Yuyan's corpse and confirm that what the old man had said was no lie.

“Her spiritual soul is lost.... Well, where did it go...?” Meng Hao’s eyes were filled with madness; he knew that all of this was caused because Chu Yuyan had helped him in the Windswept Realm, leading to her serious injuries. However, although her soul had been in a fragile state that could split apart at any time, when she stepped into the vortex to return home it had been whole. Meng Hao had looked at her as she had left, and could confirm that that was the case.

The problem must have occurred... after Chu Yuyan entered the vortex leading from the area of the Windswept Realm back to the Ninth Mountain. Meng Hao had also made that trip, which had taken only a brief moment.

Clearly, though, that brief moment was all it took... for Chu Yuyan to lose her spiritual soul!

“The physical soul lives because of the spiritual soul. The spiritual soul nourishes the physical soul.... If I can find Chu Yuyan’s spiritual soul, then maybe... bringing her back to life wouldn’t be impossible!” Meng Hao looked back down at Chu Yuyan, his eyes flickering with a glint of obsession as he decided that he would definitely track down Chu Yuyan’s spiritual soul!

His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture as he unleashed Karmic Hexing. He gently pushed down onto Chu Yuyan’s forehead, and yet, no Karma appeared. His eyes flickered with madness as he suddenly began to walk around Chu Yuyan’s coffin. He moved faster and faster, until ghost images of himself appeared.

First it was one ghost image, and then two, three, four....

He moved so quickly that a wind sprang up, and even more ghost images appeared. Soon there were ten, fifteen... and even more.

Meng Hao didn’t hesitate at all to use the strange walking technique, which would enable him to return... to the day before!

One day earlier, Chu Yuyan’s physical soul had not completely dispersed! 1

As Meng Hao walked, gradually, the power of time travel began to surge out. As soon as the aura appeared, it blurred the vision of the surrounding cultivators. Even Pill Demon's eyes went blank.

It was only the Kunlun Society Patriarch whose eyes suddenly began to shine with a bright light. Inwardly, massive waves of shock battered his heart.

"The Dao... of time travel!!

"I can't believe that Meng Hao... can actually use the Dao of time travel!!"

He wasn't the only one who was shaken. The other Dao Realm Patriarchs in the Kunlun Society were all shaken. As they watched the scene with divine sense, they were thoroughly flabbergasted by Meng Hao.

They all watched as gradually, more and more ghost images of Meng Hao appeared, until finally, they merged together into a ring.

In the middle of that ring was the coffin and the area around it, which apparently... was moving through time. The grass swayed, and ripples spread out. Numerous figures appeared, coming and going, going and coming.

None of the spectators noticed how incredibly pale Meng Hao's face was. This walking technique was bizarre and enigmatic to be sure, but it was incredibly difficult for Meng Hao to use it to return Chu Yuyan to the previous day.

However, no thoughts of giving up entered his mind. He moved faster and faster. Regardless of how much blood oozed out of his mouth, regardless of how his body withered, regardless of how his cultivation base trembled, he persisted.

As he continued onward, more ripples flowed through the area around Chu Yuyan, moving faster and faster. More time passed, and suddenly Chu Yuyan's eyes opened.

It was in that moment that Meng Hao finally stopped in place. He coughed up nine mouthfuls of blood, and a patch of his hair turned white

and then transformed into nothing but ash, and his entire body looked much older.

Chu Yuyan's eyes were listless, which was how she had looked the previous day just before she died. She was not aware of the things around her, nor could she sense that Meng Hao had traveled back an entire day just to see her.

He didn't hesitate for a moment. Still coughing up blood, he performed an incantation gesture and unleashed a Demon Sealing Hexing magic, reaching out to push his finger down onto Chu Yuyan's forehead.

In that moment, his mind trembled, and suddenly, faint Karma Threads appeared all around Chu Yuyan.

More than half of the threads were connected to Meng Hao himself, which caused the pain in his heart to intensify. However, he knew that time was of the essence. He focused all of his concentration and began to examine the other Karma Threads, hoping to use them to locate her spiritual soul!

He held nothing back, rotating his cultivation base to the full, causing azure light to shine around him. Finally, he found one particular Karma Thread that led out into the void. He sent divine sense to follow it, going further and further until he was also in the void.

It was there that Meng Hao caught sight of a vortex, a familiar vortex that was none other than... the vortex which Paragon Sea Dream had summoned after the collapse of the Windswept Realm, allowing everyone to return to where they had come from.

It was there that the Karma Thread began to collapse. Seeing that the thread was about to vanish, Meng Hao roared, causing more Time magic to explode out. Coupled with his cultivation base and the Karmic Hexing, he once again began to walk, using the Dao of time travel.

He unleashed all of his power, until finally, he saw... two visions!

In the first vision, he saw Chu Yuyan stepping into a vortex, her face pale. That was the moment in which everyone returned through Paragon

Sea Dream's vortex.

By means of this particular divine ability, Meng Hao was able to follow Time back to its Essence to see what had happened here in the past.

What he saw was that, as Chu Yuyan traveled through the vortex, she passed by the Nine Mountains of the Mountain and Sea Realm. When she was passing by the Eighth Mountain and Sea, all of a sudden, a voice could be heard within the vortex.

“Soul, come to me!”

*

1. Interesting point. In the original Chinese, Er Gen actually typed Xu Qing instead of Chu Yuyan in this paragraph. It's not the first time, either. I've always fixed the mistake, but this is a pretty intense scene where he yet again mixed up the names.

Chapter 1211: Immortal Ancient Builds a Bridge Leaving the Ninth Mountain!

Actually, that vortex had not truly been created by Paragon Sea Dream. It had long existed within the Mountain and Sea Realm, a teleportation path that, theoretically speaking, could be opened by anyone in the Dao Realm. The caveat was... that the price to open it was staggering.

In fact, only Paragons could arbitrarily pay such a price. Even if an ordinary Dao Realm cultivator were to overdraw on their cultivation base, they would not be able to open that ancient teleportation path.

Therefore, most of the time the path was safe. For example, when Meng Hao and all the others used it, nothing untoward happened. However, the path was not under the protection of one of Paragon Sea Dream's magical techniques, it was merely a teleportation path. Therefore... accidents could happen.

Also, certain accidents could occur which not even Paragon Sea Dream would be aware of.

Originally, nothing bad should have happened to Chu Yuyan. Although her soul was in a state where it could be split, as long as she returned to the Ninth Mountain and Sea and spent enough time recuperating, she would return to normal.

Unfortunately... during the process of her teleportation, someone unleashed a soul gathering magic!

Although many cultivators could use such techniques, all of them were different, leading to different results. Some could affect an area only 3,000 meters wide. Others... could actually cover an entire Realm!

Its purpose was to find departed souls and collect them together, where they could then be used by certain cultivators to craft magical items.

In the second vision, Meng Hao saw a huge land mass and a sect. That sect was built into a black cliff, upon which were written three huge characters.

Blacksoul Society!

Meng Hao saw countless souls there, converged into a massive river that flowed toward the black cliff, and an incense burner into which the souls were being absorbed.

A cultivator sat cross-legged next to the incense burner. He looked middle-aged, but had a pale face. His expression was arrogant, and from the fluctuations of his cultivation base, it was possible to tell that, shockingly... he was a 2-Essences Dao Realm expert.

As Meng Hao looked on, he caught sight of one particular soul among the others which was... Chu Yuyan!

The key to it all was not the Dao Realm cultivator, but rather, that incense burner; that was how Chu Yuyan's soul had been extracted from the teleportation tunnel.

The incense burner was surrounded by thousands of other cross-legged disciples of this sect. When they waved their arms, black bottle gourds would fly out of their bags of holding, which would then belch forth innumerable souls.

Unexpectedly, most of those souls... belonged to mortals!

Miserable screams then rang out as the souls were refined by the cultivators. Slaughtering mortals was something absolutely forbidden within the Mountain and Sea Realm, something that most people would condemn!

After all, the mortal world was the foundation of everything. If cultivators were allowed to wantonly massacre the mortals which made up their foundation, then the Mountain and Sea Realm would eventually collapse.

In fact, the laws of the Mountain and Sea Realm expressly forbade such a thing. If something like that happened, Heavenly punishment would be rained down. And yet, there was no Heavenly punishment being inflicted on this Blacksoul Society!

The vision shattered into pieces, and everything was over. Killing intent

flickered in Meng Hao's eyes, transforming into a tempest as he rose to his feet.

"The Blacksoul Society of the Eighth Mountain and Sea!" he thought. "So the laws of the Mountain and Sea Realm do not send Heavenly punishment your way. Regardless of the reason, I... will become your Heavenly punishment!" His eyes glowed coldly, both from what had happened to Chu Yuyan, and also what the Blacksoul Society was doing to the souls of mortals. Such brutality was something that Meng Hao could not accept.

Even death could not wipe out the vileness of such crimes!

A murderous aura exploded out from him, causing all of the cultivators around him to tremble. Even the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Kunlun Society looked on with serious expressions.

None of them had any idea why such a murderous aura had suddenly sprung up from Meng Hao.

He took a deep breath, causing the murderous aura to fade away, then gazed down at Chu Yuyan. As he looked at her, he could tell that the spiritual energy of Mount Kunlun had been gathered in the coffin, ensuring that Chu Yuyan's fleshly body would not be destroyed.

The spiritual energy of the Kunlun Society was different from that of elsewhere. It was abundant in life force, and had existed in this place for a very long time. It inherently caused life force to flourish, and would significantly reduce the decay rate of the flesh itself.

The coffin itself was also a treasured item that was in harmony with the Kunlun Society, and would further slow the process of decay. However, if it left the Kunlun Society, that could harm Chu Yuyan.

Meng Hao was well-aware that he could not take her corpse away. It wasn't that he was fundamentally incapable of doing so, rather, it would be best for Chu Yuyan to stay here.

Eyes flashing with determination, he extended his right hand and rested it on the coffin, silently unleashing numerous magical techniques to seal

it. Glittering marks appeared all over its surface, imbuing it not just with Meng Hao's aura, but more importantly... the will of the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

That would ensure that Chu Yuyan's corpse would not be defiled.

At the same time, Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing a huge amount of Immortal jade to fly out and pile up around and over the coffin, forming a mountainous grave mound!

The grave mound of Immortal jade left Chu Yuyan completely protected. Coupled with the unique aura of the Kunlun Society, it would ensure that she remained preserved for quite some time.

Having done all this, Meng Hao waved his hand again, causing... an equally towering mountain of Immortal jade to pile up next to the first pile!

Clasping hands, he turned toward the Kunlun Society's Dao Realm Patriarch and bowed deeply. "Kunlun Society, I hope it will not be too much of an inconvenience to ensure that Chu Yuyan's body remains preserved. Please take this mountain of Immortal jade as a token of my deep thanks!"

The ancient old man looked at the mountain of Immortal jade. Even he was moved by the sight of so much wealth. Actually, as far as the old man was concerned, Chu Yuyan was a disciple of the Kunlun Society, and it wouldn't have consumed much of the Kunlun Society's spiritual energy to keep her body preserved in the first place.

Now, with all this Immortal jade added in as compensation....

The old man looked back somberly at Meng Hao and nodded. Then he said, "Young friend Meng Hao, please set your mind at ease. You have my word that as long as I live in this world, this place will be a restricted area in the Kunlun Society. Nobody will be able to step half a pace into it without Pill Demon's express permission!"

Meng Hao once again bowed deeply to the ancient man. He knew well what was expected in return for this promise.

“Many thanks,” he said quietly. “I... owe the Kunlun Society a great favor!” Meng Hao rarely owed other people. But now, for the sake of the safety of Chu Yuyan’s corpse, he was willing to do just that.

“Well then, young friend Meng Hao... did you find Chu Yuyan’s spiritual soul?” The old man smiled in response to Meng Hao’s words. In fact, to him the most important aspect of the whole exchange was to sow the seeds of a good relationship with Meng Hao.

“I did,” Meng Hao replied, eyes shining coldly.

“Where is it?” the old man asked.

“The Eighth Mountain. Senior, I have some matters to attend to, so I’ll take my leave. I will do everything I can to bring Chu Yuyan’s soul back as quickly as possible!” He looked over at the grave mound of Immortal jade, then turned and left.

He knew that he owed far, far too much to Chu Yuyan. So much so, in fact, that he could never pay her back....

His journeys through the Ninth Mountain and Sea were now at an end. He was not in the mood to think about where his next destination was, nor did he need to. Filled with the desire to slaughter the Blacksoul Society of the Eighth Mountain, he turned, transforming into a beam of light that shot out of the Kunlun Society.

His heart was torn to pieces, and his mood was foul as he headed directly toward the Ninth Mountain!!

The Ninth Mountain was the home of the Ji Clan, but was also... the home of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite!

His plan to leave the Ninth Mountain and Sea had originally involved flying alone through the starry sky. But now, time was too short. Xu Qing was currently healthy and safe in the Fourth Mountain, and could wait for him. Unfortunately... Chu Yuyan’s soul could be refined at any moment at the hands of a cultivator of the Blacksoul Society....

When he thought about that, Meng Hao’s heart ached even more, and the killing intent in his eyes grew more explosive....

As he shot off into the distance, he murmured, “Mountains have no worries, ’til hit with snowy flurries; waters feel no woe, ’til the winds do gust and blow....”

The peak of the Ninth Mountain was occupied by the Ji Clan. Further down from them was the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Apparently, the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite had long since predicted the fact that he was coming, even down to his exact time of arrival. By the time he arrived, all of the cultivators of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite were seated cross-legged in a public square, chanting scriptures.

A huge cauldron was located in the middle of all of them, fully 300 meters tall, filled with swirling streams of smoke that formed the character ‘Immortal’.

The character was faintly visible, radiating a feeling of ancientness that made it seem as if it had been transported from ancient times into the modern era.

Closest to the cauldron were five old men, all of whom were in the Dao Realm. The centermost of that group had white hair, and was the very Patriarch who had paid such close attention to Meng Hao during the trial by fire so many years ago. 1

He was also the one who had calculated... that Meng Hao would eventually join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. He had already prepared the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite grand spell formation, to help Meng Hao... open the path to the Eighth Mountain!

“I know why you’ve come....” he said.

“The Immortal Ancient will build a bridge connecting from here to the Eighth Mountain. Walk across that bridge... to pierce through the void, traverse the starry sky, and on the other side... will be the Eighth Mountain.

“I hope that your trip there... goes smoothly.” When he finished speaking, he waved his right index finger toward the huge cauldron. Instantly, the other Dao Realm experts performed incantation gestures

and pointed at the cauldron as well. The chanting of scriptures from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite disciples grew louder, echoing about in all directions, transforming into a strange power that shook the entire Ninth Mountain. It was almost as if there were some massive power within the Ninth Mountain itself that was complying with the cauldron....

To explode out!

To become a bridge!

It was a bridge that pierced through the void, a majestic vortex which connected the Eighth Mountain and the Ninth Mountain through the barrier that separated them. It was a majestic bridge, shining with boundless, scintillating light.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then bowed deeply to everyone in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. He was very appreciative of what they were doing, and even felt deep affection that caused him to hold the bow for several breaths of time. Then he looked up and stepped forward onto the bridge!

He followed the bridge up into the vortex in the starry sky, which he entered, taking him... far, far away!

This was... Immortal Ancient building a bridge!

To leave the Ninth Mountain!

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Note from Deathblade: When I originally translated the name of Book 7, I said "leaving the Nine Mountains." I later realized the mistake and changed it. Sorry about the confusion.

*

1. The Patriarch mentioned here popped up several times during the trial by fire in the Ruins of Immortality. Two key parts were in chapters 852 and 854.

Credits

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